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THIS "don't-do-that-you-naughty-child-or-you-will-be-punished" attitude towards the Irish Free State is fatal. Ireland was divided about Mr. De Valera's wisdom in raising the question of the abolition of the oath and comparatively few Irishmen are anxious to leave the Commonwealth. But everyone in Ireland regards the Free State as a virtual Republic, and Mr. Thomas's threat to bar Ireland from any preferences at Ottawa will have the effect of swinging a mass of opinion to Mr. De Valera's side. And rightly so, for the argument against abolishing the oath was that the Commonwealth is now a federation of equal nations and that England had not therefore in any case a right to interfere in Irish legislation. But now England has interfered while the Bill is in course of discussion and still awaits possible defeat or amendment in the Senate. The British Government's right course was to leave the problem for the whole Commonwealth to discuss at Ottawa. For England to take a high-handed attitude without the assent of the Dominions is the surest way of breaking up the British Commonwealth.

* * *

Meanwhile, Mr. De Valera is meeting his own economic situation with a series of drastic measures. The new budget raises the standard income-tax rate from 3s. 6d. to 5s. in the £, increases surtax, takes 25 per cent. of the Irish hospitals' share of sweepstakes for State purposes, and imposes indirect taxes by new or increased duties on newspapers, entertainments, corporation profits, tea, tobacco, and other commodities. Mr. De Valera's financial position is not made easier by the fact that he is himself failing to receive from the farmers the land annuities which he has promised not to pass on to England. For 1930-31 the unpaid annuities amounted to £19,000. For 1931-32 the total is £146,000—and this notwithstanding an additional agricultural grant of £750,000. Ministers have stated that payments must be made, but a rigorous enforcement of the law may have a serious effect on Mr. De Valera's political fortunes. Patrick Murphy struggling on a small farm against hard times and falling prices needs a lot of persuading that although the annuities in bulk are not due to the English he must continue to pay his share as before. Besides, there is little doubt that candidates and canvassers told him that if Fianna Fail won he would not have to pay.

* * *

This new taxation comes upon the top of a swiftly moving tariff policy. The Cosgrave Government's policy was "selective protection." A case had to be made before a Tariff Commission of three high Civil Servants, who reported to the Minister of Finance.

The advice of the Commissioners was almost always acted upon and the published reports and evidence were at least proof of the complexity of almost any duty. By this method more than twenty tariffs had been imposed in nine years. The Fianna Fail Government has imposed nearly as many in less than nine weeks. Manufacturers are invited to make application to the Minister, and swift action follows sometimes by way of enormous increase of an existing duty. The one method may have been slow—the length of the examination was the source of constant complaint in the Dail—but the new scheme may prove too precipitate and has led to much confusion in business circles and to some unemployment, especially in the motor trade. In anticipation of a rise in prices, the Labour group has tabled a motion in the Dail asking that provision should be made for fair wages and conditions in protected industries. Since Mr. De Valera has great faith in State action and depends for his majority on Labour, the Free State may be in for Industrial Arbitration Courts and control of prices on the Australian model. The number of officials is certain to increase, but, as a wit has explained, the higher salaries will be brought down to meet the rising cost of living.

* * *

Within the next few weeks the Government of India must decide whether to continue or to abandon government by ordinance, and so far there is no indication that the gravity of the situation is realised either at Simla or in Whitehall. The Indian gaols are still crowded with political prisoners, and every piece of direct testimony from India goes to prove that the repressive policy is making an end of the Moderates in every province and is driving the younger Nationalists towards a contemptuous rejection of non-violent methods. Some change of temper and attitude is an imperative necessity, and we may perhaps find in Lord Lothian's statement on leaving India the promise of an effort in the right direction. It contains a direct challenge to the National Congress in a reminder that the principle of the Constitution approved by Parliament has been endorsed by the Congress as well as by the Round Table Conference. Lord Lothian can see one way of escape from the present impossible situation—that all classes in India, "including those who are making sacrifices to-day for the sake of their own ideas of the road to self-government," should throw themselves into constructive work. But how can this be while the sacrifices in question involve imprisonment? Indian Nationalists, it is assumed, will interpret Lord Lothian's words as a plea for a wide political amnesty. And why not? Unless the acknowledged leaders of Indian opinion are free to accept and discuss the new Constitution it is no more than so much waste-paper.

* * *

The Japanese have at last made up their mind to leave Shanghai. All the troops—who, it is said, number 30,000—will be withdrawn; but a small naval force will remain, and the army will be in readiness to return should the Chinese again behave naughtily. The announcement from Tokio is, in fact, a nice mixture of justification and warning. Japan never wanted to invade Shanghai; she was forced to take action in defence of her nationals; she will do it again if the agreement is not observed; and she relies on the Powers to see that it is observed. However, the main point is gained; the Japanese are going, and we do not suppose that, having burnt their fingers as they have, they will be anxious to come back. The centre of gravity now shifts back to Manchuria. The Japanese army there is being reinforced, for the Manchukuo police, we are not surprised to hear, are inadequate to cope with the "bandits" and the "rebels" under General Ma Chan-san. This struggle cannot be allowed to drag on indefinitely. The League and America must assert themselves. Japan will not easily be got to relinquish her hold on Manchuria; but to allow her to keep it will be calamitous.

* * *

Austria's troubles are as persistent as the English weather. The Chancellor, Dr. Buresch, resigned on Friday in last week, and Cabinet-making is still in full swing as we write. The Opposition parties, at odds on everything else, are united in their demand for a dissolution of Parliament. To avoid a political crisis in the middle of the economic and financial crisis, the Chancellor chose to resign and reconstruct his Government. He needed assistance from one of the three Opposition parties—the Social Democrats, the Pan-Germans, and the Heimwehr (Fascists). The Social Democrats, of course, will not support Dr. Buresch's Christian Socialists, who are actually anti-Socialist Conservatives. With the other two parties it is a case of bargaining for seats in the Cabinet. Dr. Buresch eventually gave up the task, and it looks as if Dr. Dolfuss, Minister of Agriculture in the last Government, will succeed him. Dr. Dolfuss is apparently trying to form a Government on the basis of a coalition of all the anti-Socialist parties. Whatever results from his efforts or anybody else's will not be stable in the present state of parties and of the country, which is pitiful. Austria cannot meet her obligations without help from abroad; and, since nobody seems disposed to play the fairy godmother, more extraordinary financial measures (there is already a formidable number) are in contemplation—including a moratorium. That will doubtless interest some of Austria's little neighbours, who are in much the same plight as she is. Whether it will move the great statesmen of the world remains to be seen.

* * *

Mr. Neville Chamberlain likes being gloomy, except when he is talking about tariffs—a subject about which no Chamberlain's family pride will allow him to eschew optimism. He is at his gloomiest when he talks about "economy." Here is a gloomy subject after his own heart. He has made two funereal speeches about it this week, with evident relish. After the usual lamentations over the burden of taxation that is weighing the country down, Mr. Chamberlain went on to threaten us with a new "economy" campaign of unprecedented magnitude. Nearly all that can be done has been done, he tells us, by way of scaling down departmental estimates, and the next step in "economy" must involve a drastic reconsideration of legislative policy. He hopes this will not be necessary; but . . . with so much emphasis on the "but" as to throw strong doubts upon the hope. Clearly we can expect from the Chancellor no bold

plans for the stimulation of recovery through public development. His cry is that we must spend less, though underspending is the most obvious part of the world's present troubles. The only reassurance contained in Mr. Chamberlain's speeches is his recognition that there is little more to be done by merely administrative retrenchments; for this at least means that his further "economy" plans will have to be publicly debated, and pushed through by legislative means. But this is cold comfort; for the present House of Commons is as reactionary, if not as gloomy, as the Chancellor himself.

* * *

Silk has got its additional protective duties; and there is rejoicing on the part of yet another vested interest. But there is gnashing of teeth in the West Riding. The woollen industry thinks it has been shabbily treated in being fobbed off with a mere twenty per cent. The same trouble may yet be in store for silk, since the duties announced this week are only provisional and the question is now to go to the Tariff Advisory Committee for a recommendation on the definitive rates of duty. But for the moment the silk trade is very pleased; and protectionists in general are rejoicing that yet another step has been taken towards the building of a high tariff wall round the British home market. These duties on silk involve, indeed, no new principle. The need for direct action by the Government arose only because silk, being already dutiable, was excluded from the original reference of the Advisory Committee. The decision is important chiefly because it has been so obviously taken in haste, as a direct response to pressure from the trading interests concerned. Their success is bound to encourage others to bring similar pressure to bear, and above all to stimulate the woollen and worsted manufacturers to fresh efforts. They have been told to go and state their case to the Advisory Committee, but anyone who supposes that lobbying for a tariff can be excluded as simply as this is living in a fool's paradise.

* * *

As we write, two-and-a-half per cent. Consols have risen to 63¼, and are yielding interest at less than four per cent. Four per cent. Government stocks are almost at par; and the credit of the State is back on the long-awaited four per cent. basis. At this rate a big conversion operation cannot be far off, especially if the Bank takes the steps which are well within its power to cheapen money rates yet further. Yet, apart from the possible saving in war debt charges, there is little enough to be pleased about in this cheapness of money. It does not mean that ordinary industrial borrowers can borrow any more cheaply than before, or that banks or acceptance houses are more disposed to look favourably at borrowers of doubtful ability to repay at the due time. What business needs to-day is not so much cheap money, or more money, useful though these can be, as more profitable uses to which money can be put. It is no use to borrow, even at a fraction of one per cent., in order to make a loss. Even where borrowers are not reluctant, banks and other lenders are now so nervous of their solvency that even cheap money remains unused. The financial world to-day worships "liquidity" above all things, and liquidity is the hardest of all things to secure. By all means let the Chancellor take his chance of putting through a big conversion. But when he has done it he will be wise to give his attention less to making money cheap than to helping it to find an outlet in production.

* * *

M. Albert Thomas, the Director of the International Labour Office, had been ill for a long time, though it was hard for those who came into contact with his energetic and forceful personality to realise that he was ill at all. His death is a serious blow to the I.L.O. In face of all the obstacles in the way, he knew how to make it count, and to defend it against all assailants. Only a week or two ago he had a vigorous skirmish with Sir Henry Betterton at Geneva, on account of some outspoken comments which he had made on the British Government's attitude. And none was better than he at dealing with the idiots who from time to time set out to prove that the League and the I.L.O. cost too much, and ought to be scaled down in the interests of economy. M. Thomas was a Socialist before he went to the I.L.O., but he always belonged to the very Right wing of the French Socialist Party, and he was probably, after his spell as Minister of Munitions during the war, not sorry to be out of French politics for the time. He dreamed now and then of going back, but the I.L.O. kept him fully occupied and with plenty of obstructors on whom to expend his vigour. Even M. Thomas could not get the Governments of the world to ratify the Washington Hours Convention, or to take international labour legislation at its true value. But his work made a big impression on world public opinion, if not on Governments. If the I.L.O. does securely establish itself in the future—as it probably will—a great deal will be owing to M. Thomas's effective direction of it in its formative years.

* * *

Lord Hewart, who created something of a sensation by his book *The New Despotism*, can scarcely be pleased with the conclusions of the Donoughmore Committee which has made a thorough investigation of his allegations. Though, of course, expressing a view that he had rendered a "useful service" by calling attention to the dangers of delegating judicial and legislative functions to the Executive, the Committee finds no substance in his suggestion that Civil servants have conspired to assume excessive powers. On the contrary it sees, what should have been obvious even to a Chief Justice, that the nature of modern legislation and administration makes nonsense of the doctrine of a rigid "separation of powers." It never has existed in this country in any case. With the growth of State control in every department of life, liberty is most easily secured, not by any futile attempt to make laws cover every special case, but by leaving a large amount of discretion to the Civil Service. Such a development, however, needs careful guidance, and the Committee suggests a number of important safeguards dealing with the form in which laws should be passed, the functions of Parliamentary Standing Committees to watch over their administration, and, most important of all, the regulation of administrative justice. These proposals will be examined in detail in the next issue of this paper.

M. HERRIOT'S CHANCE

MURDER is always foul; the shooting of the French President last week was futile as well. If the Russian fanatic who committed the crime thought to help his cause by it, or the French reactionaries thought they might turn it to their own advantage, both were promptly disappointed. There was no panic among the French people, and the elections on Sunday completed the swing to the Left. M. Tardieu's majority is swept away; the Radical Socialists have gained 48 seats, the Socialists 17. The victory is a bigger one than was generally expected, and by the end of the month M. Herriot will probably be at the head of a new Government. Hope has revived in France, and not in France only, but all across the world—even amongst the Tories of the London Stock Exchange.

But the hope falls short of confidence. M. Herriot's Cabinet-making is not going to be a picnic. The parties of the Left were united for the second ballots; but to crystallise the union of the polling-booth into a parliamentary coalition will be a delicate task. It may, indeed, prove impossible, as a correspondent from Paris points out in an article below, and M. Herriot may be compelled to turn Centre-wards, though even then the benevolent neutrality of the Socialists might be necessary to ensure his staying in power. But it is hardly worth while to pursue these speculations in detail; in a week or so the decision will be known. At the moment, however, it seems that M. Herriot has a fine chance—the chance not merely of remedying domestic discontents, but of re-shaping French policy abroad, of making France the leader in good causes instead of bad. He had such a chance in 1924, when he came into office after the collapse of the *Bloc National*, but though he began pretty well, economic and political forces were too strong for him and brought him down ignominiously. Supposing luck favours him this time—and supposing, too, that he himself has vision and courage—what can we expect of him?

French policy will be put to the test at Lausanne, where a momentous conference will assemble in June, and at Geneva, where the sittings are already in their fourth month. Three outstanding problems confront a distracted world—reparations, disarmament, Manchuria. On the settlement of each of these hang tremendous issues, and in the first two France's policy is all-important—in the third it might, if she chose, be a decisive factor. It would be rash to say that Lausanne offers the last opportunity of rescuing Germany from perdition. That has been said, and falsified, of a dozen conferences in the past ten years. But it does offer a good opportunity, and one which the French will reject at their own and others' peril. Germany is at the end of her tether. She cannot pay, and it seems that she intends to say quite plainly that she will make no more pretences about it. France—or a part of France—does not believe, or affects not to believe, in the genuineness of the German bankruptcy. On which side is M. Herriot? He has declared that he approves of generosity towards Germany, but not of stupidity. But is not anything short of unqualified generosity only another name for stupidity in the pass to which we have come? All the elaborate plans, with their concessions and their scalings-down, that have been imposed on Germany have proved useless, and now after thirteen years not merely the victims, but the victors, are cursing the Treaty of Versailles and the crop of mischiefs that it has produced. The German Republic, poverty-stricken and torn with internal dissensions, is tottering. Other States that emerged out of the wreckage of the war are exhibiting their empty pockets and clamouring for help. America, the universal creditor, itself now in the slough of despond, is whistling hopelessly for payment of its European debts. And France, whose policy, under her Poincarés and Lavals and Tardieus, has regularly frustrated efforts to stop the rot, is herself realising the results of a Pyrrhic victory. Relations between the Quai d'Orsay and the Wilhelmstrasse continue, as we say in our King's Speeches, to be friendly; but the feelings of the German people are bitter beyond words. If Germany were China and France Japan, M. Herriot, or some other more full-blooded imperialist, might think to make profit out of such a situation. But in the actual circumstances, neither the French nor anybody else can make anything—they can only lose. And it seems to us, therefore, that a whole-hearted policy of appeasement on the part of France would be not so much generosity as plain horse-sense.

There are, of course, practical difficulties about wiping the slate clean. It is easier for the Germans to repudiate their reparations than for us to repudiate our war debts. A great many people in America understand the position and would gladly see an all-round cancellation. But these are not yet the majority, and a curt announcement that we are going to pay no more might have deplorable effects. We hope that the day will come, and come soon, when the Middle West will learn that tons of gold from Europe are no more use than tons of elephant tusks from Africa in curing America's economic troubles. It should be the business of statesmen on both sides of the Atlantic to do all they can to bring that day nearer. Meanwhile, if without American concurrence we cannot expect Lausanne to be a complete triumph, it need not be an utter failure. If France would agree with Great Britain on abandoning for good and all the attempt to squeeze more drops out of the German orange, a foundation would be laid on which to build. And if M. Herriot could present his Left face and not his Right face to Dr. Brüning, he would provide a better security for France than all the armed forces for which the unfortunate French taxpayer has to foot the bill.

The problem of security takes us from Lausanne to Geneva. Here again Germany, and Italy also, wants pledges of good faith. M. Tardieu's plan is a pinchbeck scheme of disarmament; it will satisfy no one. Will M. Herriot turn his back on that, and adopt M. Blum's policy of cutting down armaments? If he does, the whole atmosphere of the Conference will be changed, and there will be a certainty, instead of as now only a faint possibility, of results. His record in this matter is not too encouraging. He has talked a good deal of the orthodox patter about security; but he is not a monomaniac, and if his alliance turns out to be with the Socialists and not with the Centre, we may at last see a new interpretation of that ill-omened word; and discussions on global tonnage, qualitative and quan-

titative reduction, budgetary limitations and all the rest, may cease to provoke mirth in the Admiralties and War Offices and despair among plain men. If, on the other hand, M. Herriot takes M. Tardieu's line, then Europe continues to be a camp—or a score of camps—of armed lunatics; Germany, still disarmed, is incited to kick more violently against the pricks; and all of us must pull in our belts another hole to provide for more guns, battleships and other deadly trash. This is not to say that France is the devil at Geneva, and all the rest angels. But France is unquestionably the chief obstacle to a reduction of armaments, and M. Herriot's responsibility will be great.

There remains the question of the Far East. In the struggle between the League and Japanese aggression, France has played a minor part, though it is true that M. Briand was president of the League Council in the early stages. The villain of the piece—or if that is too strong a word, the weakling of the piece—has been Great Britain. If the British Government had taken a resolute line—and resolution would have been prudence and not rashness—had supported, instead of cold-shouldering, the Americans, had led, instead of holding back, the Assembly of the League, the Japanese would have been out of Shanghai long ere this, and the problem of Manchuria, though it might not have been settled, would have been very much nearer to settlement. Manchuria is now one of the danger spots of the world. Here, we suggest, is M. Herriot's third big chance. There is no reason why France should not take a leading part in upholding the Covenant of the League, and if M. Herriot's professed devotion to the League is real, there is no reason why he should not prove it in this crisis. Such a move on his part might not be popular in Downing Street; but it ought to stimulate or shame Sir John Simon into better ways; it would encourage America and the rest, and it would discourage the Japanese. At worst, it would not make the solution of the problem any harder; at best it would, as we have said, be the decisive factor in solving it. But this, like disarmament and the fate of Germany, still lies on the knees of the gods in Paris.

A CRAZY WEEK-END IN PARIS

"LIKE a nightmare" is such a common literary *cliché* that I hesitate to use it in describing the atmosphere which hung over Paris for two or three days after President Doumer's assassination. Yet if ever there was a time to use the phrase aptly it is now. A nightmare is not merely something terrible, it is something essentially incongruous and irrational: something which can be neither explained nor justified by the ordinary laws of logic. President Doumer was shot by a madman; and there was such a lack of method in Gorgolov's madness, and the circumstances that had brought together the victim and the murderer were so fantastic, that for two or three days the people of Paris appeared to be seized with a sort of morbid desire to question the irrationality of Providence. It would be absurd to say that Paris was overwhelmed with grief at the news of M. Doumer's death. The papers said that he was a very fine and good and noble man; one or two of them even called him a great man; but these obituary articles were taken as read. From the point of view of the ordinary Frenchman he was only a figure-head, with very little individuality or personality. Few people had as much as seen him. It was known that he had lost four sons in the war, and every Frenchman felt sorry for him as a matter of principle; but his stiff, official manner and his frigid, motionless face, which looked like a mask or a skull, inspired no affection, and no French President had, indeed, done less than Doumer to win the affections of the people, or even a superficial popularity. The revueists and cartoonists neglected him completely. M. Doumergue, with his *bonhomie* and his everlasting cinematic grin, had been a popular President; Doumer left the people completely indifferent.

Yet on Friday afternoon the news that he had been shot by a demented Russian spread like wildfire through Paris. I had never seen Paris in such a state of nervous excitement. The first evening papers, giving details of the assassination, arrived in quantities quite insufficient to meet the demand; there were wild scrambles and fights round every newspaper kiosk; hundreds of papers torn to shreds littered the boulevard pavements, and in the Métro carriages scores of people crowded wildly round anybody in possession of an evening paper. "C'est impossible! . . . c'est incroyable!" was on everybody's lips. It sounded insane—like a nightmare—that anybody should want to kill old President Doumer. Why? What for? The aggressor was a Russian, and the Communist *Humanité* on the one side, and the Coty press on the other, at once tried to attach a political label to him. White Russian. Red Russian. The Ministry of the Interior in its communiqué rather foolishly described him as a "Russian anarchist"—the implication being that, though he was evidently mad, his madness was "red" rather than "white." But the saner part of the press, and, above all, the Socialist and Radical papers, declared quite emphatically on Saturday morning that it would be absurd to attach any political significance to the crime. The man, they said, was neither a Red Russian nor a White Russian, but just a mad Russian. A Russian whom I saw on the Saturday told me that he had met Gorgolov on one or two occasions, and that he had felt extremely uncomfortable in his company; it was like being with a lunatic at large, and a dangerous lunatic at that. His physical strength, together with the wild look in his eyes and his crazy speeches, was terrifying. He was obviously a very aggressive kind of maniac. The published details about the man fully substantiate this verdict. Gorgolov was a megalomaniac who imagined himself to be a sort of Russian Messiah. He was responsible for a book of crazy poems signed "Bred" (Russian for delirium), in which he predicted "the triumph of the violet over machines," and which fully justified the author's *nom de plume*. Recently he also published a seventy-two-page pamphlet, the programme of the "pan-Russian national party of the Green Peasants," of which he claimed to be the leader, and of which he appears to have been the sole adherent. I have seen a copy of this manifesto, and it strikes me as the most appalling gibberish ever put on paper. The future pan-Russian state, it says, shall be "neither Communist, nor Socialist, nor Monarchist, nor Jewish, nor racially impure, nor foreign." It is violently anti-Semitic, and holds up Hitler as an ideal. This "ideology" is neither white nor red; in fact, it comes nearest of all to the "ideology" of "Little Father" Makhno and the other peasant bandits who took such an active part in the guerilla war in the Ukraine in 1918 and 1919. They supported alternately the Bolsheviks and the Whites—their loyalty varied with the fortunes of war—and these bands were also responsible for most of the massacres of the Jews during the Civil War. I know for certain that Makhno, the most famous of the "green" bandits, was in France some time ago, and it is highly probable that Gorgolov was associated with the "green" movement at one time or another.

Not that this helps to explain the senseless murder of the President of the French Republic. It was precisely the utter absurdity and "unreality" of the murder that literally stunned Paris. It was not like Jaurés' murder. It was not as if M. Tardieu had been murdered by a Communist or Léon Blum by the *Action Française*. There was something

weird and uncanny about the whole thing, more weird and uncanny than anything Dostoevsky had ever imagined, and more irrational and absurd than the proverbial *âme slave*—one of the pet subjects of the French literary dilettanti. In some quarters attempts are still being made to " rationalise " the murder, and a few papers are still talking of Gorgolov's Communist connections; but it all sounds highly unconvincing. For two or three days Paris lived in a state of intolerable depression. Everyone in the streets was reading papers; everybody looked ruffled and worried. There was no laughter in the Paris streets. Even the most popular cafés were half empty, and the Russian restaurants in Montparnasse were quite deserted—people seemed to be afraid to go near them in case they were mobbed. The Russian waiters looked downcast and terrified, and one of them told me in a low whisper that five Russian workmen had been lynched at Billancourt—a working-class suburb—the night before. I never discovered if it was true. The papers said nothing about it. M. Doumer will be buried on Thursday, and he will soon be forgotten; but during the few days that followed his death Paris looked as it had never looked before. The sight of a universally puzzled Paris was unique.

And that was the atmosphere in which the elections for the second ballot were held on Sunday. Now that the results are out one can hardly refrain from paying a tribute to the cool temper and the extraordinary balance of the French voter. Just think for a moment what would have happened in Britain if a personality of the President's standing had been assassinated by a foreigner thirty-six hours before polling day. Would it not have had the effect of ten Zinoviev Letters? The women voters would have lost their heads completely. But in France it was quite different. On Saturday everybody was still talking wildly about Doumer, but not once did I hear anybody talk in one breath of the murder and of the coming election. The two things were distinct. The Communist *Humanité* alone insinuated on Sunday morning that Doumer's murder had been engineered by . . . M. Tardieu, who, they alleged, believed that it would result in a swing to the Right! Another equally remarkable fact was the almost complete absence of any reference to the election in Friday's, Saturday's, and Sunday's papers. Every inch of space was devoted to Doumer and his assassin. Only somewhere on a back page could one discover a brief reference to the election. As for the collapse of the two tenement houses at Lyon, which had involved the death of thirty people, and the death of Albert Thomas, who was found dead in a Paris café on Saturday night, these first-class news items were treated as mere *faits divers*. Judging from the French papers published on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, everybody in France had lost all interest in the election. It was, therefore, all the more surprising to find that the poll on Sunday was, if anything, higher than the week before. The voters had gone to the polls without being " whipped " by the press, and, what is more, the Doumer assassination, though it had weighed heavily on their minds, had had no effect whatsoever on their voting papers.

The election has resulted in a very decisive victory for the Left—far more decisive, in fact, than one would have thought after examining the results of the first ballot. The " republican discipline " of the Radicals and Socialists has worked perfectly—wherever it was possible they have worked together to " keep out the reactionary." The old Pioncaré-Tardieu-Laval majority has been wiped out, and the Left now has a clear majority. Even if we omit the twelve orthodox and eleven unorthodox Communists, the Left—that is, the Socialists, Radicals, French Socialists, and the Painlevé group—have nearly 330 seats between them. This gives them an absolutely clear majority—a very much clearer majority, in fact, than the one they had in 1924, when they were constantly obliged to depend on the Gauche Radicale and other Left-Centre groups.

It would, of course, be futile to imagine that this new *Cartel des Gauches* is a very homogeneous majority. Painlevé and his followers, Herriot, Daladier and Blum, do not always see eye to eye, and least of all in matters of foreign policy and disarmament. Herriot and Painlevé are still obsessed with the old idea of Security; and, on the other hand, Blum has stated emphatically that the Socialists will not work with the Radicals unless they agree to reduce military expenditure. Further, the Left-wing Radicals are in favour of disarmament, and there is, among them, a rather strong feeling against the " patriotic " Herriot. At the same time, Herriot has refused to form a purely Left Cabinet in which the Socialists would not take a share of the responsibility, and a great deal now depends on whether the Radicals will agree to reduce military expenditure, as otherwise the Socialists are not likely to join them. Their only alternative would then be to form a Radical-Centre coalition stretching as far, or almost as far, as the Tardieu group. Against this, however, the Left-wing Radicals would almost certainly rebel. All this is very important, for the whole course of future events, including the outcome of the Lausanne Conference, will now depend very largely on whether the Radicals will choose their allies on their left or on their right. We shall know before very long.

A. W.

Paris, May 10.

A LONDON DIARY

THE second volume of Lord Beaverbrook's *Politicians and the War* (Lane, 7s. 6d.) is an extremely revealing document. Seldom has a political intrigue been so candidly described by one of its chief promoters. The excuse for turning out Asquith was not only that he was conducting the war without energy, but also that he was toying with the idea of a negotiated peace. Lord Beaverbrook does not even discuss the possibility that it might have been a good thing to end the war in 1916. He assumes, too, that " the public " or the " popular instinct," as he calls it, rightly guessed that we were " never nearer peace by negotiation that in the summer and early autumn of 1916," and he assumes that all right-minded people were bitterly opposed to the idea. The public he refers to was the mass of non-combatant ignorant persons who believed what Lord Beaverbrook and his friends offered them in the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express*. I should have liked to have a chance to introduce Lord Beaverbrook to some of the private soldiers I knew in those days. I hardly remember one who would not have welcomed peace by negotiation then or at any other time. But most of them were killed, because Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Beaverbrook got their way, and so what they said then is not evidence. As to Lord Beaverbrook's statements of fact, I expect to see a good many of them challenged by those who shared in these incidents. But I do not think he can be accused of malice in this book, nor can he be said to be blowing his own trumpet. He has an excellent description of a dinner at Lord Birkenhead's at the time when Mr. Lloyd George was making his Cabinet. Beaverbrook himself believed that he was destined for the Board of Trade, and felt patronising towards Churchill, who, as he knew, was to receive no office at all. There was some amusing sparring before Churchill realised that he was being given a hint that he was not, after all, to be included in the Government. After an indignant outburst, he got up and marched out of the house. Lord Beaverbrook, as it turned out, was also disappointed. He would not take the office of Postmaster-General: he wanted a job in the actual conduct of the war. His job of honest broker over, he suddenly found himself isolated and unrewarded.

A quietude like death settled on the Hyde Park Hotel. There were no more calls from politicians—no more agitated interviews. No special messengers arrived with notes. Even the telephone bell ceased to ring. The reaction was tremendous. It is said that people in a balloon do not feel any sensation of motion, but simply think the earth is drifting past them. There came to me this same curious sense of detachment—passing by degrees into

boredom and then into anxiety, and finally into a kind of desperation. I had been in the centre of affairs and now I found myself translated to the extreme circumference.

This is Lord Beaverbrook at his best—candid and almost modest.

* * *

After talking to friends who have just arrived from the United States I am not in the least surprised to see that a movement is at length on foot to allow Federal money to be used for the relief of the unemployed. The prospect of next winter's famine is beating down the resistance to the notion of a "dole," and Mr. Owen Young, who may quite possibly be the next President, is, I see, capitalising Mr. Hoover's dilatoriness by supporting a great scheme of public works and loans to municipalities. All this makes the remarks of the new American Ambassador at the Mansion House sound even more complacent and absurd. The *Times* reports him as having said that "deflation in America is proceeding calmly and in an orderly way." But this is beyond belief. He surely must have said "inflation" or "reflation." Even so, what about the "calm" and "order"? In the City of London Mr. Mellon, who is himself a famous banker, might surely have talked sense instead of indulging in what his fellow-countrymen used to call apple-sauce. He made light of thousands of bank crashes in the United States, speaking of them as being restricted to "small and independent houses" whose failure did not seriously affect the integrity of the credit structure. But the total of such failures in 1931 is given as something over 2,000. The Bank of United States, which crashed eighteen months ago, had scores of branches in Greater New York and depositors numbering about 400,000. Travellers in the Middle West last winter actually found themselves in important industrial centres—such as Toledo, Ohio, or Gary, Indiana—and there informed that no bank was open for business. I suppose Mr. Mellon has long ceased to be an observer of the world he lives in.

* * *

That impression is reinforced by his complacent statement that the relief of the unemployed is being "cheerfully and effectively carried on in thousands of communities throughout the United States." Of course, relief has been given by all communities, cheerfully or otherwise. How effective the relief measures are now, after the third winter of the great depression, may be judged from a survey of forty cities, the summary of which made a terrifying front-page story in the American newspapers three weeks ago. It was there proclaimed that the total of unemployed, and therefore of destitute families, had reached an appalling level—the latest estimate is that there are between 800,000 and 900,000 adult unemployed in New York alone, and that everywhere the reserves of the associated charities, community chests, special City funds and State grants were completely exhausted. A friend who has just returned from a long tour of American cities confirms this report. There is, he says, hardly a town between New York and the Pacific where the authorities and welfare committees are not facing the second half of this Presidential year with despair. The external evidences of distress vary, but the distress is universal. People are actually dying of starvation in many places. Chicago, Detroit and Philadelphia, he tells me, are all spectacularly poverty stricken. Boston, however, contrives to avoid the shocking spectacle of daily bread-lines. In Times Square and other centres of New York the long line stretches out and doubles back, while in many districts the able-bodied beggars hold up almost every passer-by. It is said that the offer of food is commonly refused, but my friend has stories to the contrary. In Washington a well-dressed man stopped him in a road and calmly asked to be taken to a restaurant and given a meal. To a question as to whether he were hungry, the beggar gave his card as a civil engineer, and replied, "If I were not, should I humiliate myself by asking you?"

In speaking of the wonderful successes of the Cavendish Laboratory under Lord Rutherford's leadership last week, I unwisely accepted the published accounts of the splitting of the atom. Several correspondents have written more in sorrow than in anger to point out that I ought not to have taken any notice of the account given by the scientific correspondent of the *Times* or of Sir Leonard Hill's remarks about the Law of the Conservation of Energy. The facts are given by a scientific expert in an article below.

* * *

On the whole, I should say, the quaintest company of newspaper folk in the world are the men and women who write the "feature" columns of the Hearst Press. One of the "sob sisters" of the Pacific Coast chain adventured lately into an unfamiliar field. "Some poet has written," said she, "'Oh, to be in Great Britain now that April is coming!'" This provoked a few protests, and the lady confessed her error. The line, she explained, should read, "Oh, to be in England, now that May has come!"

CRITIC.

THE ATOM

[FROM A SCIENTIFIC CORRESPONDENT]

WITHIN two months two first-rate discoveries in experimental atomic physics have been made in the Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge. The first discovery was that of the neutron, made by Dr. James Chadwick; the second that of Dr. J. D. Cockroft and Dr. E. T. S. Walton of a new and extremely important method of disintegrating atoms. The respective interest of these two discoveries is distinctly different. The existence of the neutron presents physicists with a new sort of particle, a new aspect of nature. The neutron has properties of a new type. For instance, it penetrates material objects enormously more than any other sort of particle. It may go right through a wall of lead feet thick. Compare this with the penetrative power of the most violent particles ejected from radium; these are unable to pass through more than a thin sheet of lead. Most wonderful of all, as Professor Niels Bohr has so brilliantly shown, the neutron has the property of being able to go right through another sort of particle, the electron. Bohr's discovery shows the kind of merit in the discovery of the neutron. It has already prompted men to discover quite unexpected things because it is in itself quite unexpected. No one would have guessed that a neutron and an electron do not necessarily bounce apart when they collide unless he had had to take the existence of the neutron seriously. The calculation which shows that neutrons may go through electrons without anything much happening is relatively simple. It depends on the wave-theory of matter. The size of the waves which constitute a particle vary inversely as the mass of the particle. This means that electron-waves are much larger than neutron-waves because an electron is much lighter than a neutron. Hence, the compact bundle of neutron-waves is able to go through the large streaming waves of the electron, when it runs into one. The reasoning is precisely similar to that which explains why the sky is red at sunset. The small particles of dust in the air are able to stop the tiny blue-light waves from the sun, but the larger red-light waves stream over these particles. Thus the neutron goes through an electron for reasons similar to those which explain why dust-particles allow red-light but not blue-light to stream over them.

I mention this discovery because it shows how a new thing causes people to look at phenomena in a new way and hence make very unexpected discoveries. Professor Bohr considers the discovery of the neutron very important indeed, because it requires the scientist to exercise his imagination in an unexpected region. He has told me that he believes it may be as important for atomic physics as the alpha-

particle—that particle which is the nucleus of a helium atom and is ejected by an exploding radium atom, and which is the experimental weapon with which Lord Rutherford forged the modern conception of the atom.

The neutron is, of course, a close combination of an electron and a proton, i.e., of a unit of negative and a unit of positive electricity. The negative and positive charges cancel, so that it has no sensible electric charge. Consequently, it is not attracted or repelled by other ultimate particles and nuclei. Its existence and properties were surmised in 1920 by Lord Rutherford, with extraordinary detail. Owing to its lack of electric charge it is not influenced by electric or magnetic fields. Its peculiar and elusive properties will be a powerful stimulus to experimental physicists. One may well expect that some entirely new methods of atomic investigation will be evolved under the challenge presented to experimentalists by this exceptional particle.

The discovery of Dr. Cockroft and Dr. Walton is of quite different intellectual type. They have invented a new technique rather than a new idea. (This contrast is given for the sake of illumination, because the idea of the neutron is not new, though the reality of the idea is new.)

The Cockroft apparatus is an obvious sort of apparatus to construct, if you know how, that is, if you are a Cockroft. It is merely a development of a well-known piece of mechanism. But engineering genius was necessary to achieve the development. Cockroft is an electrical engineer who subsequently studied physics. He knew how to adapt the powerful machinery evolved for distributing electrical power over transmission lines, such as one sees all over England, to the exact uses of the physicist. Also, because he has naturally approached his problem as an engineer, he has obtained results in a form which the engineer may presently be able to exploit. In a hundred years or so, and one hopes sooner, other engineers may be able to exploit his results for industrial purposes.

Cockroft and Walton's apparatus is nothing more than a large, powerful, and ingenious apparatus for multiplying the speed of particles from an electrical discharge tube. Particles named protons, which are nuclei of hydrogen atoms or units of positive electricity (all names for the same thing) are obtained from a tube similar to the sort which is used in making those brilliant red sign-lights that one sees over shops and buildings. Then they are projected down a long tube subjected to electrical voltages up to 800,000. This causes them to shoot down the tube at a tremendous speed. At the bottom of the tube pieces of lithium and other substances are placed in the track of the flying protons. The impact of the protons on the lithium atoms is violent enough to disintegrate them. It is important to realise that the violent proton may produce an even more violent atomic explosion. The effect is similar to the exploding of a mine by firing at it with a small gun. The energy of the bullet may be less than the energy dissipated by the exploding mine. Thus a fast proton may act as a detonator which " sets off " an atom. The energy obtained from the atomic explosion may be much greater than the energy needed to produce the atomic explosion. There is nothing contrary to the law of the conservation of energy in this phenomenon. We have to remember that all the atoms in the universe are little packets of energy which were made up at some stage in the evolution of the universe. They are not infinitely stable, and there is no obvious reason why comparatively mild techniques of detonating them should not be found. In Cockroft and Walton's experiments each proton which succeeds in disintegrating an atom releases far more energy than it possesses itself (as energy of motion), but at present only one out of every ten million speeded-up protons succeeds in disintegrating an atom. If every proton in the stream could disintegrate an atom far more energy would be liberated than would be required to operate the apparatus. But at present, owing to the one in ten million inefficiency, far more energy is required to operate the apparatus than is liberated in atomic explosions. Nevertheless, atomic energy has been liberated by a machine for the first time, and this is a thrilling and suggestive achievement. Previously, atomic energy has been liberated only through the assistance of radioactive substances. These explode naturally, and eject swift particles which disintegrate other atoms near them. Cockroft has discovered how to imitate, and, indeed, surpass, radium, for he may produce particles of varying speed and immense number, while radium produces only a comparatively small number at certain fixed speeds. He has invented the atomic vehicle of unlimited power and infinitely variable gear, compared with the radioactive vehicle of tiny power and four-speed (or so) gear-box, as it were. This flexible instrument should be enormously powerful in further investigations of the structure of the atom. This is probably its most immediate value, as a new probe for searching out the structure of the atom, and many years' work will be necessary to complete a preliminary survey of the properties of atoms with it. What will be revealed by this survey remains to be seen, and physicists look towards it in excited anticipation.

TO CERES

THAT SHE WOULD MODERATE HER FAVOURS

" You know, of course, that the economists are hoping for a bad Canadian harvest this year." (Letter from one of them.)

GODDESS whose bounty yields
Each year the plenteous increase of our fields,
If ever prayer of man thy heart could touch
Hear now our prayers again
That rise in altered strain,
And swell the ripening ears—but not too much!

Call now to mind that wheat
Is not produced so much for men to eat
As on exchanges to be bought and sold;
And, linked by quaint device
Of Wholesale Index Numbers with the price
Of all commodities and even of gold,
Plays a predominant part
In all the mystic ritual of the mart:
Whence comes this culminating paradox
Of economic science orthodox—
Unless the price be tolerably high
None can afford to buy.

Avert thine ears and eyes
From prayer and sacrifice
Of those who, being hungry, cry for bread.
Will Western crops increased
Relieve the famished East?
Nay, but since credit lacks, all will be burned instead.

Goddess whose bounty yields
Too plenteous an increase of our fields,
This year at least thy benefits restrain;
Lest, while world prices drop
After a bumper crop,
We starve through superfluity of grain.

MACFLECKNOE.

NO MAN IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS ACTIONS

LORD DAWSON of Penn, writing on the subject of road accidents, expresses the opinion that " conditions, rather than persons, are chiefly to blame." " The Ministry of Transport," he declares, " is the victim of the fact that the demands of travel have outstripped the ways and means." And, presumably, the thousands of people who are killed and injured are also, like the Ministry of Transport, the victims of the fact that the demands of travel have outstripped the ways and means.

It is, as a rule, an excellent thing to search out every possible excuse that can be made for human beings. And, if we look deep enough, we shall find that everybody who has ever suffered a wrong was the victim of somebody who was himself the victim of conditions. Heredity and environment explain perhaps three-fourths of every murder. If your pocket is picked you can always bring yourself into a more charitable frame of mind towards the thief by reflecting that he is, after all, the victim of pre-natal and post-natal circumstances over which he had no control. If in the course of your travels you are given a bad piece of money, the lineage of the crime may be traced back to something that happened in chaos before the shaping of the first star. If your great-great-grandfather had married a different woman, it is possible that, instead of being a respectable and philosophic citizen, you might now be serving a sentence in Dartmoor. Circumstances, chances and conditions divert our destinies, and where our responsibility for our actions begins and where it ends no one knows. Even if the road-hog could not be excused on the ground that conditions of travel had changed, he could find plenty of other excuses in his ancestry and upbringing.

Similarly, an ingenious motor-bandit, accused of theft, might have several impressive lines of defence. He could point out that widespread unemployment turned men's minds to dishonest means of making a living, since honest means were lacking; that he had grown up during a war and post-war period in which parents could not exercise the normal supervision over their children; that he found himself in a world in which all the old religious and ethical values were in the melting-pot; that, as a devotee of the cinema, he had discovered that it was possible to lead a life as exciting as Dick Turpin's even in the drab civilisation of our own times. And, if he said all this, adding a few slurs on the character of his great-grandparents, I do not see how a jury could come to any other conclusion than that he was three-parts "not guilty." To know all, it has been said, is to forgive all. I should prefer to say that to know all is to forgive about three-quarters. Certainly, it is instinctive with us to hold other people partly responsible for their actions. It is instinctive with us even to hold ourselves partly responsible for our actions. The extreme determinist, who affirms that our actions are the effects of causes that existed before we were born, does not acquit of all blame the hotel waiter who spills soup down his shirt-front. He knows in his intellect that the man was predestined to do this from the beginning of time; but feeling differs from knowledge, and he feels that the waiter is a confounded fool and ought to be sacked. If he could combine knowledge and feeling in a simple sentence, he would say to the waiter: "Child of a misguided universe, I know that it is not your fault that you have ruined my shirt-front, and that the causes of this beastly accident lie hidden in the womb of time, but, for Heaven's sake, try some other job than waiting, or, if you must wait, go and wait in some other hotel." To which the waiter might logically reply: "Sir, from all eternity I was destined to be a waiter, and even to be a waiter in this particular hotel, and to spill soup on your shirt-front on this particular evening." I do not see what possible answer the determinist could make except to call the manager and to demand the waiter's dismissal.

It may be urged, however, that all this is no evidence that human beings are in any way responsible for their actions. After all, we get angry with cats and wasps and chairs and tables which have been the means of causing us an injury. Yet no man can reasonably impute guilt to a cat or a wasp or a chair or a table. I have heard a gardener cursing a cat as he surveyed a ruined seed bed, and I suspect that he would have stoned it in Old Testament fashion if he could have got hold of it. I have heard a man howling with insensate rage against a wasp that, in perfect innocence, had stung him. I have heard a man saying "Damn that chair!" as he hurt his shin against it in the dark. Children, and adults lacking in self-control, have even been known to kick and thump inanimate objects against which they have bruised themselves. May it not be that our anger with human beings and our desire to punish them are as unreasonable as a child's quarrel with the door or table that has injured it?

It may, and to a great extent it is, but somehow human beings always behave better when they do not believe this. Put the blame for everything on conditions and circumstances, and it will be difficult to feel any of that admirable indignation that alters the faces of nations and societies. The employment of small children in mines and in factories was for a long time defended as being due, not to the thoughtlessness of the human beings who compose society, but to the conditions imposed by the industrial revolution. The half-time system was more recently defended on similar grounds. Employers, it was said, were helpless in the grip of economic necessity. There was an element of truth in the defence, but fundamentally it was not true. Wherever there is a failure of justice, or decency, some human being is ultimately responsible. If we did not believe this, how could anyone have the right to blame Japan for her incursion into Manchuria and Shanghai? Japan can plead the excuse of conditions, and it is a magnificent excuse. But, though magnificent, it is, as most people outside Japan recognise, no excuse at all for what she has done. If Japan is to be regarded as the victim of conditions we might as well resign ourselves to looking on with a philosophic smile while the world tumbles into chaos.

And so, too, in this matter of accidents on the roads. Let us put as much blame on conditions as we like; but let us also remember the simple fact that all motor-cars, motor-lorries, and motor-bicycles are driven by human beings or by creatures in the shape of human beings. These human beings, we know, vary in their behaviour according to the degree to which they are held responsible for it. For example, in the early days of the motor-bus, it was a common enough experience to find oneself in a bus which was being raced through the streets with another bus as if in a chauffeurs' Derby. Obviously, conditions were partly to blame. If the buses had been trams, they would have been running on rails, and so would have been unable to pass each other. The bus companies, however, decided to hold the drivers responsible, and, instead of turning the buses into trams, turned the human beings who drove them into reasonable drivers by forbidding them to indulge in racing. And, ever since then, the London General Omnibus Company has trained its drivers to regard themselves not as helpless victims of new conditions but as human beings who are responsible for adapting themselves to the new conditions. As a result of this there is probably a higher average of good and considerate driving among the London bus drivers than in any other class of motorists.

After all, everyone who uses the roads sees daily evidence not only of new conditions of travel, but of human vanity, selfishness, arrogant push and stupidity. The vain youth showing off to a girl by passing everything on the road, whether it means cutting-in or passing at a blind corner, is a victim, not of new travel conditions, but of his own vanity. The lorry-driver who rushes out of a side-street, and all but smashes a small car, is not a helpless creature of circumstances, but a selfish bully who feels that if he risks an accident the risk will fall less on himself than on the driver of the small car that he runs down. If law-breaking motorists are to be regarded mainly as the victims of conditions, I do not see why every other class of law-breakers should not be excused on similar grounds. The plain fact is that the drivers of cars, like the rest of the population, are human beings, good, bad and indifferent; and the bad man in a car is no less responsible for his actions than the man who sets fire to a hayrick or the man who cheats at cards.

Y. Y.

Correspondence

THE SO-CALLED BETRAYAL

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Saturday's issue of the *Times*, dealing with the resolutions of the National Liberal Federation at Clacton, contained this statement: "The allegation that Free Traders who voted for the National Government at the General Election have been 'betrayed' will not bear a moment's examination. The salient sentences of the Prime Minister's manifesto and of Mr. Baldwin's message leave no doubt whatever that tariffs were to be used experimentally and as a means to certain definite ends." I immediately sent the following observations to the *Times*, but my letter was refused.

What are the facts? At the 1929 Election the Conservatives secured 260 seats. When the new House of Commons met last November there were for the National Government 554 of all parties, of whom 471 were Conservatives, while the Opposition only mustered 61. Millions of Liberal and Labour electors had voted for Conservative candidates on the understanding that, although the latter were mainly Tariff Reformers, the question of tariffs was not immediately before the country, and that the fiscal policy of the last eighty years would only be changed if an exhaustive open inquiry by impartial non-party experts proved this to be necessary. They certainly never imagined that they were about to be forced to submit willy-nilly to the reversal of the policy which was reaffirmed by big majorities at the General Elections of 1905–6, 1923 and 1929—least of all that this was to be done on the recommendation, after a few weeks' study, of a committee of politicians (the Cabinet) most of whom were pledged beforehand to repeal.

The Prime Minister on October 25th said: "I am not going to be run by any party. I do not know what might have happened if an election had been fought by the Conservatives standing alone, but they are not. It may be that they might try and put something over us. I am not their man. I am going to inquire into tariffs with an open mind, but if there are to be any partisan manoeuvrings then again I am not their man."

On December 8th, in reply to Sir John Anthony, Chairman of the Scottish Liberal Federation, who had written protesting against the following statement made by Lord Stonehaven, Chairman of the Conservative Party, "We have a National Government, with a mandate to carry out Tory policy," Mr. Ramsay MacDonald wrote: "I am the head of a Government which was elected on a national issue embodied in a national appeal, and so long as I remain in that Government that will be its policy."

Mr. Baldwin, speaking at Hull in June last, said that the fiscal question would be referred to Commissioners far above the stress of party politics, like His Majesty's judges. On the recommendation of these Commissioners tariffs would be made, subject only to the assent of Parliament. "Our Courts of Justice," he added, "have a tradition for impartiality; the Tariff Commission should set itself to emulate that tradition." During the election he said (Leeds, October 20th): "I stand by that, and I hope it will help many of my Liberal friends to vote for a National Government"; and later on, "After all, what is the fundamental issue? It is not Socialism, it is not individualism, it is not Free Trade, it is not Protection." On October 24th, in a statement to the press he said: "I want to say a word to those who are trying to confuse the issue with attempts to revive the Protection—Free Trade controversy of twenty-five years ago. That is not the real issue; the Prime Minister and Mr. Snowden have both stated the position fairly accurately."

What was it that Mr. Snowden actually did say in his famous broadcast appeal of October 17th? "We all joined the Government on the clear understanding that controversial party questions will be set aside until we have completed the task of restoring national solvency. I do not believe that the Conservative leaders would regard a majority obtained in the circumstances of this election as giving them a mandate to carry a general system of Protection in the new Parliament. Such a radical departure from our established fiscal system could not be made without an emphatic and unequivocal decision of the electorate."

Have any steps been taken to get such a decision? Mr. Baldwin's Tariff Commissioners have been appointed, not to consider "far above the stress of party politics" whether or not tariffs are necessary, but whether or not the general tariff of 10 per cent., imposed without even consulting them, is sufficiently Protectionist!

On February 4th, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Exchequer, explained the so-called National Government's Tariff Bill to the House of Commons, and three weeks later—on Friday, February 26th, to be precise—it passed its third reading. Thus the most revolutionary financial measure which has come before the country for a century was disposed of in a mere fraction of the time which has often been allotted for the discussion of comparative trifles.

Glasgow. D. M. STEVENSON.

CO-OPERATORS AND INCOME TAX

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to your issue of May 7th, in which there appears an article headed "Co-operators and Income Tax." The following extract may, I think, create a wrong impression in the minds of your readers:

> Take first the question of taxing Co-operative interest on share and loan capital. There is obviously no final reason why the recipients of such interest should not pay income tax, if their total incomes are large enough to make them subject to tax. . . .

Readers may assume from this statement that interest on share or loan capital received by co-operators is not assessable to income tax. Such an assumption would be incorrect. All interest paid by co-operative societies is assessable in the hands of the recipients. This is clearly shown in the explanatory circular No. 12A (Ins.) which is issued by the Inland Revenue Authorities along with Form No. 12A in which taxpayers are called upon to submit a return of their income to the Inspector of Taxes. Paragraph 6 of this circular states: "Care should be taken to include any income received or credited in respect of interest on bank accounts or deposits, interest from Co-operative Societies on loans, deposits or share capital (but not dividends on purchases)." Not only is interest paid by co-operative societies assessable in the hands of the recipients, in addition Co-operative societies pay income tax under Schedule A upon the annual value of properties which they own and under Schedule B on profits of farming operations. This assessment Co-operative societies contend results in Co-operators being over-taxed, a contention which has been supported by the Inland Revenue. Mr. (now Sir) E. Stanford London, as a witness for the Inland Revenue before the Royal Commission on Income Tax, 1919, was asked by a member of the Commission the following question:

> I would like to know what the view of the Inland Revenue is on the suggestion put forward by the Co-operative Movement that they are actually over-taxed at the present time.

To this question he replied:

> If a co-operative society is to be treated like an ordinary trader, you have only to look at the statements I have put in showing what the profits are and what tax we are already receiving under Schedule A to see that their statement cannot be controverted.

In view of this statement your readers will not be surprised that we, like you, believe the agitation for the infliction of further taxation upon co-operative societies is "a mere piece of competitive vindictiveness inspired by the private trading interests."

The Co-operative Union, R. A. PALMER.
Holyoake House, Manchester.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I regret the writer of the above named article did not approach his subject in a more judicial spirit and not from a party point of view. The Co-operative Movement as far as distribution is concerned is, of course, excellent; it has not been so successful in production, especially in primary production, and in the greatest of the primary industries, viz., agriculture. I think I am not exaggerating when I say its efforts have been complete failures.

All this, however, does not affect the subject of taxation which, even in the interests of the Co-operative Movement itself, should be placed on a fair and equitable basis.

This would no doubt have been done long ago but for the political pull the Movement has upon both parties. As far as

dividends are concerned paid to *bona fide* members there seems no doubt these are not liable for tax, but interest on share capital undoubtedly is. Also the profit derived from non-members is liable as these are not registered. It is exactly the same kind of profit as that made by either private companies or any other form of industry.

Your contributor admits this contention, but proceeds to say, like the housemaid, that as it is only a little one it might be excused. The question of the balance of profits not distributed, but placed to reserve, seems to me exactly on the lines of the balance of profits placed to reserve by any body of directors of any private company. The profit of any private company is liable for tax as soon as made, whether distributed or placed to reserve, no matter how many shareholders there are, or how small their holdings. The shareholders, if not eligible for income tax, have a claim for rebate on the amounts distributed to them individually, but they cannot claim for the amount placed to reserve which may be invested for use for further developments of the undertaking. So it comes to this, that if a Co-operative Society places £1,000 to reserve, it can invest or spend £1,000, but a private company can only invest or spend at the present rate of tax £750, no matter how many of the shareholders are liable or not liable for income tax. This is neither fair nor equitable. The expression "a mere piece of competitive vindictiveness" used by your contributor tempts me to give an obvious retort, but I will simply say I deprecate his remark, and leave it at that.

The difficulties of ascertaining the amounts due for tax, which should be paid by the Co-operative Movement under a fair and equitable system of taxation, have been magnified by the writer of the article, as they always are by the self-interested writers on Co-operation. The same principle of making returns which is imposed upon thousands of employers as to making returns of the wages and salaries paid by them to their employees could be quite easily applied to Co-operative Societies for the purpose of obtaining the necessary information, at very little expense.

Many of us are surprised that a National Government is again evading the issue by the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry, when the last Commission made recommendations very much on the lines I have endeavoured to outline above—but such is the curse of politics, expediency rather than justice.

T. W. TOOVEY.

King's Langley, Herts.

FICTION AND THE READING PUBLIC

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

SIR,—There is a naivety about Mrs. Leavis, even in anger, which checks hasty retort. Let me try to set out dispassionately her grounds of complaint. She accuses me of inability to find any errors in her book, *Fiction and the Reading Public*, save by misrepresenting what she says; she accuses me (and Miss Storm Jameson supports her) of misapprehending the purpose of her book and therefore criticising her method of doing what she never set out to do; she is indignant that a mere publisher should sit in judgment on a research fellow of a Cambridge woman's college; and her ultimate mortification is that so ill-equipped a critic should have been let loose in, of all papers, the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

The last point can suitably be treated first, because it illustrates most clearly the simple self complacence which underlies this rather petulant intellect. Regarding the NEW STATESMAN as a high-brow paper and her book as a high-brow book, she assumed that like would embrace like and go their way rejoicing. But books are not so much high-brow or low-brow as good or less good, and Mrs. Leavis' book, although it has many admirable qualities, is not so uniformly good as she imagines.

I confess that, until I read her letter in your issue of May 7th, I had regarded my review as more favourable than it might have been. It would not have been difficult almost to destroy her claim to serious consideration as a chronicler of literary taste by contrasting the ex cathedra arrogance of her own critical judgments with her imperfect knowledge or faulty presentation of the historical facts upon which any such judgments, if they are to carry a more than personal weight, must be based. But she had condensed a mass of material so dexterously, had clearly put so much toil and enthusiasm into her book, was so courageously provocative—that it seemed fairer to commend her manner and only in selected instances set her matter right.

However she despises my commendation, and counters my criticisms with charges of misapprehension of her purpose, of misrepresentation of her words, and of a general anti-high-brow prejudice natural to a tainted and commercial mind.

First, misapprehension. In this regard I am willing, things being as they are, to offer Mrs. Leavis an apology. It is indeed made perfectly clear that the book is (in Miss Storm Jameson's words) "an examination of typical best sellers to be used as an index of the cultural level of classes and ages." I agree that this is not the same thing as a survey of popular fiction for its own sake, and if I implied that the latter is the sole purpose of *Fiction and the Reading Public*, I was at fault. But did I imply any such thing? I certainly discussed the book primarily as an analysis of successive generations of popular fiction, and only secondarily as a survey of cultural deterioration in the fiction-reading public, because this seemed at once the more logical and the less cumbrous method to adopt. Popular taste in reading and the actual books and periodicals popular at any one time are phenomena which react continually one on the other, which, as it were, mirror one another. If either can be shown to be unfairly adjudged, the presentation of the other becomes automatically suspect. Admittedly I could have chosen the taste element in Mrs. Leavis' book and worked back from her general conclusions to the novels and papers on which they were based. But the result would have been the same, and the process more laborious.

Now we come to misrepresentations, of which my most serious appears to be that implied in the phrase, "the preferences of a rather pharisaical minority." This, says Mrs. Leavis, is a sneer designed to conceal, either the fact that I have not read the third section of *Fiction and the Reading Public*, or that therein the author "shows in detail, by analysis, why one novel can be said to be better than another." I read her third section, and it certainly lays down that a few are better and the rest worse—but merely because Mrs. Leavis says so, and says so with such an assumption of infallibility that instinctively one suspects her impartiality and distrusts her judgment. In defence of my publisher's presumption in commenting at all on a work which shows a disinterested (though subsidised) concern for literary standards, I can only plead that, although manifestly belonging to a lower order of creation, I seem to know a good deal more about the history of popular fiction and its distribution to the reading public than Mrs. Leavis, and that the fact has peculiar relevance to the present case. She has chosen to tackle a subject which must take these degrading forms of knowledge into continual account; and it is no use, when failures to do so are pointed out, for her loftily to declare that "for my purpose the trade of publishing is of no interest except as its developments affect literature by threatening taste." On precisely this aspect of publishing history her whole argument hinges, and by its imperfect presentation is partially vitiated.

Mrs. Leavis says she could easily dispose of my several specific criticisms. She replies to, but hardly disposes of, two of them. Note 86 in her book says about *Pelham*: "The sales are suggestive. It was first issued in 1828 in three vols. at 31s. 6d. by Colburn. Routledge published their 1s. 6d. railway edition in 1853" (then follow the huge figures of Routledge sale). This note amplifies a sentence in the text to the effect that the rise of the railway bookstall about 1850 and the consequent triumph of the yellow back "swept the Harrison Ainsworths and Lyttons into popular esteem." What can this mean save that before 1853 *Pelham* (and Lytton generally) had no large popular sale? I ventured to point out that he had. In the matter of G. W. M. Reynolds, Mrs. Leavis is equally unreliable. Certainly she discusses him on pp. 175–7. She calls him the Northcliffe of his age, and dates his activity and influence from the founding of *Reynolds' Miscellany* in 1846. But she does not mention his name on pp. 152–8, where she is discussing the tradition of sensational fiction from 1800 to Edgar Wallace and the novelists who made their living by cheap serial publication in parts or magazines. Yet here, though involuntarily, he belongs. Reynolds was not a Northcliffe, cynically exploiting a new periodical public. He was a doctrinaire radical, who ingeniously decided to sugar the pill of his political propaganda with exciting fiction for which, long before 1846, he had shown his astounding facility. He did not even invent the type of paper *Reynolds' Miscellany* was. He copied it from the *London Journal* which was itself an improved copy of *Lloyds' Atlas* and *Lloyds' Miscellany*.

It is to be hoped that Mrs. Leavis will revise her more technical pages for the next edition of her work. I should be glad to

supply a list of further errors, which could be easily corrected to the great advantage of an often brilliant and educative book. But I do not suppose that she will let me do so.

MICHAEL SADLEIR.

THE EISLER PROPOSALS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Both the "torrential positiveness" and the lack of "clearness at certain vital points" of my little propaganda book, *This Money Maze—A Way out of the World Economic Crisis*, are due to the fact that it is a condensation of a much more explicit and technical presentation of the subject which has just been published in French under the title *La Monnaie, Cause et Remède de la Crise Economique Mondiale* (300 pp. with 34 diagrams and much statistical material, 7s. 6d., Georges Valois, Paris, Place du Panthéon 7). So as not to frighten away the general reader and to make it possible to publish the book at the purely nominal price of 1s. for 136 pp., I was forced to leave out in the English edition about 160 pp. of closely reasoned technical and even mathematical argument. It would need three times the space of Mr. G. D. H. Cole's very full and fair review in your issue of April 16th to convince my learned critic—to his delight as he very kindly says—of a few slight misunderstandings of my proposals and of the soundness and perfect logic of my scheme. As you cannot devote so much space to a technical discussion of monetary problems—although I do think that no question would deserve closer study than the possibilities to put right the world's monetary arrangements which Mr. Cole admits to be "all wrong"—I shall most reluctantly resign myself to sending to Mr. Cole personally the type-script of my detailed reply. I hope it may tempt him to return to the task of studying more closely what the director of the British Industrial Institute, Mr. N. Wilde (*Journal of the Institution of Production Engineers*, April, 1932, p. 21), has called "the most perfect scheme for stabilising prices I have ever encountered," adding, "The real problem is to transfer it from paper to action." On the preceding pages of this *Journal* your readers may find the text of a lecture of mine which explains (p. 16) the technique of keeping wholesale prices stable in terms of increasing bank money as well as (p. 15) a refutation of the criticism that I want to introduce "two different kinds of money"—which would be contrary to Gresham's Law. For the purpose of stabilising the exchanges no gold-exchange credits are required. Sterling securities such as are used for pegging the Anglo-Egyptian, the Irish and the Colonial exchanges are perfectly sufficient.

I shall be in England in the third week of May and am perfectly willing to discuss the proposed plan in public with Mr. Cole or any other authority before any audience interested in the problem how to fight trade depression and unemployment in a scientific way.

ROBERT EISLER.

Unterach a/Attersee,
Ober Oesterreich.

THE ARISTOCRATIC EMBRACE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—There remains an aspect of the "aristocratic embrace" which raises for Labour problems of the most fundamental character, but which I have waited in vain for your correspondents to discuss.

The essence of this problem is admirably presented in Henri de Man's *Au dela du Marxisme*, and may perhaps be summarised in his words as "*le snobisme qui fait que le travailleur voit dans le bourgeois un être digne d'envie et d'imitation.*" In other words, while intellectuals mechanically denounce all intercourse with the enemy, the entire working class movement, leaders and led alike, is sedulously, and almost inevitably, engaged in imitating the manners and adopting the standards of the middle class. The working class representative in Parliament adopts with inconceivable rapidity the manners and costume of the prosperous middle class. The head-gear of Labour members, from the cap, *via* the sombrero, to the Homburg and the billycock, might of itself furnish material for a whole history of the Labour movement.

The Trade Union organiser acquires the appearance, and indeed the mentality, of the salaried professional. In more than one country there are even signs of the emergence of an hereditary Labour bureaucracy, the ex-working-man organiser of one generation giving his children a professional training to qualify them for a place in his own organisation. Co-operative movements, whose avowed object is to replace Capitalism, are compelled to equip their agents and travellers with orthodox capitalist arguments, manners and costumes, to advertise in the usual way in the usual places, and to press "Smart Gents' Suitings" and "Latest Paris Fashions" upon the attention of working men and women. The Labour daily press, with its huge competition prizes—though it continues to denounce those whose incomes are not earned—is incessantly, and amidst the admiring applause of its readers, creating new unearned incomes. And all this is not merely the familiar spectacle of the enthusiastic theorist coming to terms with the workaday world, nor yet is it evidence of the sad corruption of the leaders of the working-class. It is merely a symptom of the familiar truth, which Mr. Bernard Shaw pointed out more than thirty years ago, that the working-class itself, so far from shunning the class above it and all its ways, enthusiastically imitates and respects it. Not only do working men and women on Sunday and holiday dress as like the commercial traveller and his wife as possible; not only does every prosperous artisan's home contain a best parlour with aspidistras, lace curtains and enlarged ancestral photographs reproducing as faithfully as possible the most striking features of the Victorian drawing-room, but local Labour parties, working-class chapel-organisations and the like are always eager, when they get a chance, to elect as their chairman a fellow member from a slightly higher economic class.

Almost all these phenomena, for my part, I accept as inevitable, and regard as entirely honourable to all concerned. But there are surely a number of fairly far-reaching deductions to be drawn from them. I will here suggest only two. One is that Socialism has nothing whatever to do with class-consciousness. The other is, that while the entire working-class movement for the last twenty years has been steadily coming to social terms with its economic "superiors," it is idle for middle-class intellectuals to lash themselves into a fury because Labour Cabinet ministers do not decline to eat with the people they do business with.

"Greenways," Old Headington, Oxford.

GODFREY ELTON.

SUNDAY CINEMAS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—May I beg the freedom of your columns to correct the impression which may have been conveyed to your readers by Mr. George Lansbury's necessarily compressed version of the financial situation of the East London Hospital for Children as given in my address to the Court of Governors?

Friends have congratulated me on the reduction of an overdraft of £14,000 to so small a figure as £930. The true position is that the total indebtedness of the Hospital to its bankers was increased in 1931 by £930, being the excess of expenditure over income, and that total indebtedness is to-day well over £10,000 and *likely to increase*. Truly a crushing burden upon a small institution hidden in a slum from the eyes and knowledge of the charitable public.

The Rydings, Woodlands Road, Bickley, Kent.

ALAN G. CAVE.

THIS WEEK'S RUSSIAN SUPPLEMENT.

The following writers have contributed to this week's Russian Supplement: Sir George Paish, formerly adviser to the British Treasury, is a well-known financial expert and the author of several authoritative books on international economic problems. Dr. Margaret Miller is a lecturer on economics in the University of Liverpool. She has paid several visits to Russia and has made a particular study of the financial problems of the Soviet Government. Mr. Krzhizhanovsky is the Vice-President of the Academy of Science in Leningrad. Maxim Gorky is the best known living Russian man of letters. Miss Sylvia Saunders was for some years a foreign correspondent of the Manchester Guardian: she has just returned from a visit of some months to Russia.

Miscellany

STAGE DUMMIES

WHEN I muse over the transience of systems of stage presentation, I am apt, as theatrical antiquary, to adapt the well-worn French apothegm to my own particular standpoint and murmur, "autres temps, autre accessoires." To consider the common run of properties of one specific era in the history of the drama and then contrast the impression gained with one's knowledge of the common run of properties in another era is to be struck by the diversity. Not wholly useless is the reflection, for it is indeed in this impermanence that the hollowness of that infective shibboleth, "Shakespeare in Modern Dress," taken as a principle, lies. At best, it admits only of a partial application. Swords are demanded in most of Shakespeare's plays, and swords are not common wear to-day.

One property in frequent use in remoter times has practically disappeared from the stage: the dummy. To some extent this is due to the steady march of humanitarianism. Not only have most of the barbarous customs of old been abolished, but mankind has grown too squeamish to tolerate, much less enjoy, their mimic representation. Yet the time was when horrible sights, on the stage or off, were the delight of the masses. Decapitation scenes and scenes of torturing were rife in the French mysteries of the Middle Ages, and, in these, dummy figures had perforce to be regularly employed. They were technically known as "feints," and the term indicates how they were made to serve. It was simply a matter at the critical moment of adroit substitution. That nothing might be lacking in the conveyance of the illusion great care was taken in the manufacture of the dummy, either as whole (where it was complete), or of its component parts. The severed head had a positively blood-curdling verisimilitude. That great authority on the French religious drama, M. Gustave Cohen, tells us that the head was first carved in stone with the actor as sitter, then modelled in pasteboard, and finally coloured with discretion and rendered hirsute. Obviously, with trunks, there must have been an equal painstaking.

This, however, was by no means the genesis of the stage dummy. In making it so important a factor in their drama the Elizabethans, if they had thought it worth their while (only Ben Jonson would have troubled to do so), might have cited classical precedent for their course. It may be that Euripides was not the actual pioneer, boldly as he innovated, but it is certain that in his tragedy of *The Suppliants* a dummy did duty for Evadne when she was called upon by the dramatic exigencies to hurl herself from the roof of the palace on to her husband's funeral pyre. Upon this effect the Elizabethans notably rang the changes. In Massinger's *The Massacre of Paris*, after the murder of the Admiral above, his body is flung down below and carried off when Anjou cries, "Away with him! Cut off his head and hands." Doubtless the command was fully obeyed before the body was brought in again and hung upon a tree: which means that the dummy had a well-joined but removable head and hands. Everything goes to show, indeed, that the Elizabethan property-makers were not a whit behind their mediæval precursors in seeking after verisimilitude in these matters. This flinging down of bodies seems to have enjoyed some vogue in the Marlovian period and was evidently then a new thrill. In the last act of the anonymous *Tragedie of Soliman and Perseda*—a mysterious piece which was apparently brought out at much the same time as *The Massacre of Paris*—two bodies were toppled over from a high tower, the one after the other, and fell with a dull thud on the open stage. But effects of this order soon suffered taboo—and for very good reason. Once with gull and gallant the habit of sitting upon the rush-strewn boards became fashionable, all hurtling from on high became "most tolerable, and not to be endured."

Still the dummy had come to stay: less thrilling but more serviceable and sensible methods of using it were readily found. Its presence gave a vivid touch of harsh realism to many a chronicle play, and there can be little doubt that Shakespeare's employment of it in this particular genre largely gave rise to Voltaire's opinion that he had barbarous tastes. In sooth, if one were compelled to base a judgment solely on the *King Henry VI* trilogy, some endorsement of that stricture would prove inevitable. There is, for example, that scene in the fourth act of the second part wherein Walter bears off Suffolk, only to return after a meagre three lines have been spoken on the stage with his severed head and dangling body, both of which are contemptuously thrown down.

But simulacra of the dead were not always so ruthlessly handled. There were, indeed, cases where they were not handled at all. It sufficed for the immediate purpose to make remote exposure of the corpse. In Marston's crudely powerful tragedy, *Antonio's Revenge*, a curtain was suddenly drawn in the first act, and the suspended body of Feliche, "stabd thick with wounds," revealed to the unsuspecting court. An exposure of this sort in which the bodies of several strangled children were shown afterwards formed one of the cumulative horrors of Webster's over-rated play, *The Duchess of Malfi*. But before we gibe at the Elizabethan liking for raree-shows, let us bear in mind that mobs the world over are much of a muchness, mere aggregates of primitive man, and that we ourselves maintain a popular institution known as Madame Tussaud's.

Shakespeare—wise man!—seldom innovated, but he often bettered, and when we seek for the adroitest use of the stage dummy made in his time, it is to him we must look. *Cymbeline* presents us with the prize example. Note how Imogen's mistake is rendered credible when she emerges from her coma and finds beside her, as she thinks, the headless body of her husband. Emphasis has been laid early in the play on the resemblance in physique (but not in feature) between Leonatus Posthumus and Cloten. (Latterly I have been haunted by the impression that the two characters were written to be sustained by the one player, and it is certainly remarkable that in the play the two never meet.) To feed his particular spite Cloten has arrayed himself in a stolen suit of Posthumus's clothes, and he is wearing this when he meets his end. To arrive at the climax it is necessary for the rationale of Imogen's mistake that the head should be severed and cast away from the body: the sole reason why an act of superfluous barbarity was committed Clever, undeniably clever; but, for once in a while, we catch a glimpse of the strings that work the puppets.

In Restoration days the dummy fell into rank disfavour. Its use was only resorted to under the compulsions of an inevitable situation presenting an otherwise insoluble problem. Thus, classic precedent was closely followed by Dryden and Lee in the final scene of *Œdipus, King of Thebes*, where Œdipus commits suicide by throwing himself from a balcony, though something more than classic ingenuity was evinced in working out the situation. From the amount of trouble taken it would appear that the fastidious Restoration audience abominated the sight of a dummy. One has to ask oneself why, when the counterfeit presentment of the king fell on the stage, it was at once surrounded by the Thebans and hidden from the spectators' sight. What purpose did this serve, seeing that the regal corpse was eventually given full honours and borne off in solemn procession? Well, the secret is that, while it was a dummy that fell, it was not a dummy that was carried off. When the affrighted Thebans gathered round the body a trap was opened down which the dummy was thrust and up which came the actor of Œdipus, who had lost no time

in hurrying down from his lofty perch. To the mild surprise of the audience it was real flesh that was given funeral honours.

The introduction of painted backgrounds shortly after the king came to his own again brought about a small revolution in stage routine, and afforded solutions for sundry problems which had hitherto perplexed the player folk. Thus, a deliciously quaint method of showing a multiplicity of the dead without littering the stage with dummies was arrived at. The bodies were simply painted on the back flats. It was in this way that the streets were shown clogged with the plague-stricken dead in the opening scene of *Œdipus*, and in this way that the scene of varied torturings in Settle's nightmare of a play, *The Empress of Morocco*, was vividly realised. Effects of this order were very properly relegated in after days to the panorama, but they served their purpose well enough in Restoration times. Horrors which otherwise could not have been shown at all were impressed upon the mind in this non-illusive way. The dramatist was beginning to find short cuts: he was now relying on the scene-painter's capacity for showing what his precursors had been forced to describe. The moral of Crowne's *The Miseries of Civil War* was incidentally conveyed by two intercalated, but, so far as the plot was concerned, extrinsic scenes of this illustrative order. In the one, a group of soldiers were shown looting and raping at a country farm; and in the other a town appeared on fire, with bodies of men and women dangling on tree branches, and little children impaled on pikes.

But if to-day we deplore the firm establishment of this convention in the Restoration theatre, let us at any rate bear in mind that, so far from the onus for its creation resting on our forebears, the principle had been derived from a foreign stage, then, and for long after, looked upon as the glass of theatrical fashion and the mould of dramatic form. Much earlier in the century the players of Paris had resorted to the use of the panoramic background (as one may style it for lack of a better term), seemingly to the satisfaction of their public, though not always to the approval of exacting dramatists. D'Aubignac complained bitterly that when his mediocre tragedy, *La Pucelle d'Orleans*, was produced in 1642 the players indicated the Maid's martyrdom by an obscure and badly painted picture, instead of giving a realistic representation of her agonies. Evidently the worthy abbé thought they should have run the risk of sacrificing an actress as burnt-offering for the success of his miserable play.

W. J. LAWRENCE.

PIANIST OR CONDUCTOR?

ONE of the most popular events in musical circles during the past season was the appearance of the famous conductor, Bruno Walter, at a B.B.C. symphony concert as pianist in Mozart's best-known A major pianoforte concerto. This was, I think, the first occasion on which Mr. Bruno Walter had appeared before the English public as a pianist, and the natural interest in the event was aggravated by the fact that there was to be no conductor for this performance, or, rather, that Mr. Bruno Walter would conduct the orchestra from the pianoforte.

Of Mr. Walter as a pianist there is not much to be said. He is a better musician than the majority of pianists, but he himself would probably be the last to claim any particular eminence as a pianist. As a pianist he belongs to those who have greater sensibility than virtuosity, more regard for beauty of tone and delicacy of phrasing than for musical structure or dramatic intensity, and, as an accomplished musician of real sensibility, it goes without saying that he gave a performance that was smooth, and delightful in many ways. The question is: Was this combination of the different roles of pianist and conductor successful, or how far was it successful? We shall be told, of course, by the pedantically minded that Mr. Bruno Walter was not doing anything novel, but was merely returning to an older practice, the practice before the days of "star" conductors—the word "star" being suddenly introduced to suggest the nefarious and superfluous nature of the "conductor" as such.

But one must demur at once from this assumption. There is a world of difference between the practice of a soloist and a small band of musicians combining together to perform a concerto before the development of the separate role of conductor had ever taken place, and what happened when Mr. Bruno Walter both played and conducted the Mozart A major concerto. When differentiation has taken place a return to the stage before differentiation cannot be made by trying to disguise the fact of differentiation by pushing neither function to its logical conclusion. Seated at the pianoforte, breaking off his playing to wave his hands in the air, twisting to right and left to conduct the orchestra, never being in a convenient place to direct their playing, Mr. Bruno Walter reminded me of nothing so much as a penguin flapping those wings from which the power of flight had departed.

To add that it was disconcerting to watch this performance may be met with the retort that one need not watch, since music is for the ear, and that we have nothing to do with the visible motions of musicians who are performing their tasks. At the same time I have to add from personal experience that in the concert hall the ear is generally more free when the eye is open than when it is shut. To close one's eyes in a concert hall is nearly always an effort, and this effort and the consciousness that one is doing something a little unnatural distracts from the closeness of one's attention. It is, therefore, a better practical state of things when the auditor can sit in a concert hall with his eyes open comparatively undisturbed by what he sees. If what he sees is distracting to the point of disturbing or lessening his attention so that he has to make the effort to shut it out, then he is, as a rule, in a less favourable situation for listening to music.

Now, when Mozart himself played his own pianoforte concertos with an orchestra and without a conductor (because the conductor, as we know him, did not exist in those days) he, of course, did not behave at all as Mr. Bruno Walter behaved. Mozart and his fellow musicians played rather as a chamber-music combination seeking to achieve the same sort of ensemble as we get from a good string quartet. Nobody would deny that the average good European orchestra, such an orchestra as our own B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, is inferior as a musical body to a first-class string quartet. Nothing like the same unanimity of conception, perfection of ensemble and responsiveness of parts is achieved. This is the reason why, when we hear the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Furtwängler, we are (questions of interpretation apart!) so delighted; because in these respects the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra does approximate far more closely to a first-class string quartet. Naturally it is very much harder to get a hundred or more musicians to work together *on the same level* than it is to get four. In the Berlin Philharmonic the players seem to be more nearly of the same standard of musical culture and ability than do the players in most big orchestras.

It is now quite clear that the larger the body of musicians playing as a body the more need there is for a director. There can be only one idea, not a hundred ideas, of how a piece of music is to be played *while it is being played*. The role of the conductor is an absolute necessity in the performing of orchestral music. Mozart himself, playing his own concertos with a small band of sympathetic and subordinate musicians, would no doubt have been able to give a more than adequate performance of them; but to-day I am of the opinion that unless we could get a pianist who was in the position to rehearse an orchestra constantly,

spending weeks or even months in the preparation of a single concert, we could not get as satisfactory a performance without a conductor as with one—assuming, of course, that the soloist and the conductor were in harmonious agreement. In such a case it is the soloist's conception which must and should prevail. If he is a real musician and not a mere pianist he will have all his own marked orchestral parts, and the conductor and orchestra will use them.

Owing to the need of a closer attention than usual the ensemble between the pianist and the orchestra with Bruno Walter was slightly better than normal. On the other hand, the last movement lost greatly in verve and vigour owing to the fact that Bruno Walter could not supply in his position the driving force which hardly any orchestra in the world seems able to give of its own initiative. As for the interpretation, much as I appreciate Bruno Walter's excellent qualities, he is still too much of the refined surface artist for my personal taste. This is, of course, exactly what a great many people enjoy and admire in him, and it must be granted that every time I hear him he expresses his own rather sentimental conceptions with greater simplicity and subtlety. One cannot ask more of an artist, for it is the most foolish and greenest of blunders to ask of him that his nature should be different from what it i There is room for all kinds of conceptions of every piece of music, and each must be judged first within the limits of its own nature.

W. J. TURNER.

IN DISAPPOINTMENT

DESIRE, the lovelier prophet of delight,
Forerunner from whose starry look
The world a rarer meaning took
Than ever lived in the consequence, though bright!

Motive of marvellous venture, music, deed,
Still triumph; not to thee the blame
If thine announcéd lack thy flame,
And after thee prove but a broken reed.

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

An Outstanding Performance

EVERYBODY who cares for acting which is sensitive, intelligent and passionate should see Mr. Peter Godfrey at the Gate Theatre. His work there has never lacked distinction, but his performance in *From Morn Till Midnight* is a complete justification for the revival of Kaiser's curious, hysterical tragedy. "Hysterical" is perhaps a hard word for such concentration of writing. The play has "dated" rather in mood than in its thought, and expressionist technique is still rich in promise, if somewhat meagre in achievement while it is waiting for a genuine, not a sentimental, philosophy to express. In Mr. Godfrey's hands the progressive disillusion of the rebel bank-cashier becomes challengingly poignant. The consequential torrents of eager logic as he savours the dust and ashes of the liberty for which he is giving his life is madness only in the north-north-west, compact of the hopes and fears which we tacitly agree not to talk about. Mr. Godfrey's production of this piece is less satisfactory. A large supporting company conducts itself discreetly, and Miss Betty Potter's percussive evangelism in the last Act has a terrible and magnificent earnestness.

"She Stoops to Conquer"

We are an extraordinary nation. The most artistically unconscious of all the great powers, we yet possess more artistic initiative than any of them. "Sh-h," says Thespis when tempted to transfer her supreme allegiance to Germany, "Shakespeare—Shaw—Sherriff." Once, if the Stage Society had not put her up she would almost certainly have gone. Now there are other societies to claim her, not to mention Mr. Cochran. The Representative English Players (small annual subscription, seats half-price to subscribers, one can't say fairer than that) present Goldsmith's incomparable farce at the Kingsway. The production, though over-clowned and raucous with uninfectious stage hilarity in *The Three Pigeons*, has much to recommend it. Mr. Fewlass Llewelyn, for instance, as Mr. Hardcastle. Mr. Llewelyn must often during his sixty years on the stage have perspired (we have seen him in bad plays) but Thespis has never failed to step down to wipe the sweat off his brow. Miss Mary Merrall I thought a trifle too icily artificial at times, but her performance is delightful. She is worthy of Goldsmith's beautifully balanced lines which she speaks perfectly. Her "stooping" scene with Young Marlow (Mr. James Dale, q.v., a very much alive actor who can wear eighteenth-century clothes) is roguish if a little too broguish. Miss Clare Greet is dreadfully miscast.

Mary Wigman

Miss Mary Wigman gave the first of three solo dance performances at the Globe Theatre last Tuesday. She is giving two further and different performances at 2.45 p.m. on Friday, May 13th, and Tuesday, May 17th, and should certainly not be missed by anyone at all interested in dancing as expression. Her superb impersonality has an extraordinary emotional as well as intellectual appeal. She speaks an universal language. It is the language of movement within the reach of all of us, but within the grasp of so few. Her dancing is as sparing of effort as the grace of a flower. She is limited only by the limitations of the body; and if her conceptions are greater, as those of great artists so often are, no one but herself is conscious of incomplete success. On Tuesday she gave a sequence from her "Shifting Landscape" series followed by a superb Witch Dance and two Gipsy Mood *Tanzlieder* which proved how enormously "popular" her dancing would be if she succumbed to the temptation, as dancers often do, of gilding the lily of great music with appropriate gestures and movements. Mr. Hanns Hasting's accompaniment is purely rhythmic, a piano plus the percussion instruments of Miss Gretl Curth. This music, though always adequate, is austere—often a little too austere, and at times too repetitive; but Miss Wigman leads it. She is aloof without being inhuman, often still but always vital, master of her mood and mistress of each particular movement. She is a great artist, whose unrivalled influence in Germany and America to-day should not be denied here.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Friday, May 13th—
W. J. Turner on "Contemporary Music," B.B.C., 8.20

Tuesday, May 17th—
Dr. Gray on "The Peace Army," Friends House, 1.20.
Professor B. Ohlin on "Measures Against the World Depression" (four lectures, May 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th) University College, 5.30.
"Dangerous Corner," Lyric.

Wednesday, May 18th—
M. Philips Price on "Historical Reminiscences of 1917," Royal Society of Arts, 8.15.
"Queer Cattle," Haymarket.
Carl Rosa Season, Duke of York's.
Lener Quartet, Mozart, Queen's Hall, 8.30.

Thursday, May 19th—
C. S. Myers on "The Absurdity of Any Mind-Body Relation," University College, 5.30.
"Party," Arts.
"Casanova," Coliseum.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

IT is a good thing at times to step away from the prevailing passions and enthusiasms of one's own day and look at the enthusiasms of the past. Most of the grosser errors in aesthetic criticism come from forgetting that, bright as we indubitably are, our forefathers had reason to think of themselves as not unintelligent, and were as assured as the youngest of us to-day of the validity of their judgment, the permanence of their taste. Those to-day whose conversation is all of Lawrence or of Joyce, for whom poetry is a matter of measurable emotional displacement, and no novel is good if it can be read without a certain passionless austerity of intellectual denial, how impossible they find it to keep a cool head when they read the records of great-grandfather's worship! Yet the fact remains that in the days of the Regency there was just as much reason for following after Byron as there is to-day for whoring after Lawrence; and in the days of Victoria, Swinburne had his cult and his flagellants as rightly as Joyce can claim them among his contemporaries. The need for a master, the itch for discipleship, the ache to be initiated into something that has its passwords—all these do not change much. The herd instinct may seem more elegant when the herd is a small one; but it is the same distrust of individual judgment, the same inability to keep a free mind and a clear head which hold together the small select companies of those who wish to be told. The desire for instruction is the beginning of slavery: and it is our own chains which we shake in fury or ridicule at the enslaved figures of our ancestors.

* * *

If we would know the truth about enthusiasms it is, perhaps, best to go to foreign criticism. Two recent books—M. Du Bos's profoundly imaginative *Byron and the Need for Fatality* (Putnam, 10s. 6d.), brilliantly translated by Miss Colburn Mayne, and M. Lafourcade's *Swinburne* (Bell, 15s.)—are salutary reading for those too easily impressed by to-day's fashions. M. Du Bos sees Byron as one who does not so much dramatise himself as dramatise circumstances to make them fit his predestined image of himself. The poet's inherited Calvinism has been commented on before; but never with such persuasive talent, never with such a conviction that for Byron to have fancied was to have decided. He was a man obsessed by his own shadow, magnified for him and his contemporaries until it was as largely formidable as the Spectre of the Brocken. It was to justify himself to his fate that Byron is persuaded that he is doomed to incest, and so commits himself to the destiny which is only his because he has pictured himself as driven by fate.

> The more his case is studied, the more Byron appears as the man whose work, and life no less, proceed on two planes so remote from one another that they function in water-tight compartments, and cannot possibly be unified; and it is to this wide separation between the two planes that we must assign the fact that some have doubted the Byronic sincerity, which nevertheless is among the most incontestable there are. On the one hand he is the piercing, the concise observer—and quite involuntarily, with that lordly negligence of his to which I have alluded; nothing escapes him, and he never emits that secretion of commentaries, explanations which might tenderly mitigate the crude results by filtering them through a protective veil. But on the other hand, and above all when concerned with the women who gravitate round his star, Byron, once he has entered the phase of poetic creation, becomes a prodigious myth-maker. It is by virtue of these two planes that in Byron's eyes, and with equal sincerity, Augusta can be "a fool," and the model for the portrait of Astarte.

Not only does Byron make myths—he becomes one; and here he was—though much more tremendously, vitally and justly—for his time what D. H. Lawrence has been on a smaller scale for this. Fortunately, however, Byron was surrounded by critical friends; and his vast cult was a genuine popular worship which did little harm to him, however unfortunate we may think were its effects on the populace by aiding a deterioration in taste. Eyes fixed on the glare of great fireworks, ears deafened by the crashing of drums and cymbals find it hard to accustom themselves to the loveliness of quiet light or the delicacy of less assertive sounds.

* * *

It is a pity, I think, that M. Du Bos has paid so little attention to Byron's poetry—for a more proportionate study of the work reveals not only a myth-making, but a play-acting tendency in Bryon. M. Du Bos seems to me insufficiently to separate these two. Where his study is excellent is that, in spite of his recognition of the fatal, the symbolic in Byron, he succeeds in resisting the temptation of taking this fantastic and romantic figure at his own highest valuation. He sees in Byron that note of the middle-class and the commonplace, which came from his mother, which he resented in her the more bitterly because he knew it was ineradicable in him. M. Du Bos's shrewdness and subtlety are admirably illustrated in this passage:

> The importance, the value of Augusta are, above all, of the order I shall venture to call *familial*; they are even doubly so, for if on the one hand, thanks to the incest, they saturate in Byron the outlaw, on the other they correspond to a strange but fundamental need of his nature, that of never committing himself to the outer world—or to speak more bluntly, of never going outside the family. It seems there was a mysterious localisation, which defies analysis, of pride in Byron, so that he could never be stirred to the depths by any but those of his own blood—even in the sphere of "the outlaw," there was to him no outlawry but that which brought him back to them.

* * *

M. Lafourcade's *Swinburne* is a less important book than his earlier essay, published in French, on Swinburne's youth. The remarkable thing about that, and the same is true about the present volume, was its polite if not almost unconscious exposure of the extreme falseness of Gosse's life of the poet. Gosse, who complained that Watts-Dunton had tamed and caged his wild and brilliant friend, by an odd fatality wrote a life that fitted Watts-Dunton's Swinburne rather than that strange, excitable, passionate, incalculable boy who shocked John Morley, enraged and tormented Buchanan, loved Ada Menken, was devoted to the novels of the Marquis de Sade, and had for certain of the less desirable by-ways of life a zest that threatened his existence; who became for his generation the silver trumpet of passion and rebellion. M. Lafourcade can find more in that young Swinburne than I can. There are few English critics of to-day who could write of Swinburne:

> He was however essentially a modern. He is far more akin to Proust and Gide, Lawrence, Huxley or Joyce than either Tennyson, Browning, Leconte de Lisle, Zola, Meredith or Hardy. He sowed the seeds from which grew Pater, Wilde and the whole decadent school; but he went farther than these. In refusing to suppress some of the deepest sexual tendencies of his nature he was un-Victorian; in the simple, straightforward manner in which he treats and records these impulses, he is as unlike Wilde as possible.

I cannot agree with that judgment; but it interests me that a critic of such sensibility and learning as M. Lafourcade can make it. To me Swinburne's expression of sexual tendencies—whether his own or those of invented figures—seems almost purely intellectual, frigid and ingenious. To call him "modern" conveys nothing to me; and I may perhaps ask M. Lafourcade in what way that word, except in a purely chronological sense, can be used of Proust and of Gide? Except that each is a Frenchman, each writes prose, and each is interested in certain abnormalities—none of which distinctions are matters for literary criticism—I can find nothing which Gide has in common with Proust. Indeed, what I have read of M. Gide makes me think of him as a sentimental Hellenist; a false romantic of the Yellow Book type, almost out of *Patience*. Swinburne at least is not that. He shares with Byron one distinction; each has made and named a fashion and a period, and to do that is to have in one's life and work something directed and dynamic.

RICHARD SUNNE.

NEW NOVELS

There and Back. By ADA HARRISON. With drawings by ROBERT AUSTIN. Dent. 7s. 6d.
The Store. By T. S. STRIBLING. Heinemann. 8s. 6d.
I Bring Not Peace. By CHARLOTTE HALDANE. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.
The Moon of Much Gladness. By ERNEST BRAMAH. Cassell. 7s. 6d.
Barred. By EDOUARD DE NÈVE. Desmond Harmsworth. 7s. 6d.

Miss Ada Harrison's book is not exactly a novel, and not exactly not a novel. It is an account of things seen, done, imagined, pondered, and discussed, by two young women making holiday in Italy. I am not one of those who think that the highest possible praise that can be bestowed on a book is to say that it is more interesting than a novel; but that, for what it is worth, can truthfully be said of *There and Back*. In the main, no doubt, it is faithful to historical fact; but it is a hundred miles removed from the typical "travel book" (which I happen to dislike). It does not, thank God, pretend to tell us much about Italy; its real subject is the human psyche, and in particular the female human psyche. This brings it, I submit, within the province of a reviewer of novels. That these luminous musings are woven in with a well-wrought narrative, and set against a background of colour that has almost the status of a character, is all to the good. This is, in short, an unclassifiable book, and in its way, in its highly original way, a little gem. It is written with ease and gaiety, with a charming wit and an even more charming humour. And it has moments, quiet moments, of poetic illumination. How do women think and feel and behave when they are alone together? A fascinating mystery, which is here frankly and fully explored. "Now B and I, lying along our carriage-seats," writes Miss Harrison, "open our hearts, and from each a little stream flows forth, twin streams, which do not meet and generate, but simply run together into one. . . . The name of the twin projections, the mingled stream, is Woman of Thirty." And she continues:

> What we collectively discover ourselves to be when stated, spread out, is naturally of the keenest interest to ourselves. We are thirty, of seven years' marriage, of perhaps a little more than normal taste of life and experience. We are young, our joints are still supple and we still have the habit of taking exercise, but we are within hearing distance of the intimations of maturity. We are by no means disillusioned, but we are no longer completely illusioned. In our minds, with a kind of involuntary grin, strange successor to the burning, solemn gaze of youth, we are tentatively beginning to call a spade a spade.

And not so tentatively, either. For in these pages more than one cardinal problem is discussed with a quiet wisdom, an unself-consciousness, and a humour, that are the mellow fruits of maturity. Such passages are, for the most part, rather too long for quotation: one must fall back on lighter fare. This, for example:

> Eating in the train is rather interesting. In youth it is an enormity. One would simply rather not eat at all. With age . . . one overcomes it. One comes finally to a stage where one can eat out of a paper parcel as easily as one can open a newspaper in a train. But not many people reach this stage. Eating in the train is a thing which, more than any other, people do and wish to appear not to be doing. The average second-class English lady in the act positively puts you on your honour to deny that this is food in her lap and that she is raising it to her mouth.

And this:

> I do not go to many unknown picture galleries alone. I go with M., who throws a rapid glance about, and having thus sorted the contents of the room, goes up and looks at what he wants to see. Then I creep up after him or beside him and look at the picture long and fully, and in the end get something out of it, quite a lot, deliberately, and by marital sympathy, telepathy and dictation. It is humbling and instructive. It is humbling generally to have the rudiments of something dawn on one after effort and to realise that behind them is a mass that will never dawn on one even after effort and which dawns on other people after no effort at all. And it is instructive to me personally, in this particular relation to M. assumed in a picture gallery, to savour wifeliness, which is nice as an experience but which as a life-sensation must be like living in a damp mist.

But indeed, short of transcribing the whole book, there is no end to the things that might be acceptably quoted. "There are immortal longings in us, as Shakespeare said, and as Freud has said no better, the one-note man, twanging his single string in a solemn transport of iteration." And, on the important subject of what one should eat: "Man has inured himself throughout the ages to all kinds of curious fare, to parsnips, to medlars, to *polenta* and birds' nests; but who, I wonder, set afoot the rumour that cold meat was human food?" (A rumour, one may however remark in passing, that is well established by the delicious facts of the case.) There is also a discourse on "square-root and charm" that should not be missed; and a grimly humorous story of how an ancient predatory female levied spiritual blackmail on two over-conscientious English people. The book is further enriched by a series of very lively and delicate line-drawings by Mr. Robert Austin. The drawings are as witty as the text.

Readers of that excellent and substantial novel, *The Forge*, will turn expectantly to its sequel, *The Store;* and will not be disappointed. The second book, however, can be enjoyed without a knowledge of the first. The scene is Alabama, and the period is just after the American Civil War. The Vaiden family is now scattered, and the slaves have been freed. Colonel Miltiades Vaiden takes the centre of the stage, that romantic, proud, much beglamoured Colonel Milt who, in *The Forge*, was jilted by Drusilla Lacefield, and afterwards, in revenge, seduced and deserted her. He is now the discontented husband of Ponny BeShears, whom he married for money. But the money has not arrived; he lives in a state of shabby gentility, and dreams of the day when he will make a fortune and restore to his name its ancient glory. It is a first-rate book of its kind, a good story filled with diverse and vital characters; and much of it cannot be read without that primitive excitement, that eagerness to know what comes next, which is, after all, the triumph of the good storyteller. But since the days of *Fombombo* (which, as I remember with some self-satisfaction, I was the first reviewer to make a fuss of in this country) Mr. Stribling has acquired some unfortunate tricks of style. Perhaps some one has told him that a smooth and flowing prose is destructive of vitality: a doctrine very dear to writers in a hurry. The chief of his crimes, however, proceeds from his superstitious dread of using personal pronouns and of repeating a character's name. Jerry Catlin, Marcia's son, is referred to a hundred times either as "the adolescent" or as "the hobbledehoy," when "he" or "him" or "Jerry" would have served, and served better. This way of writing is a sheer exasperation, and is constantly holding the reader up by requiring him to sort out an unnecessary tangle of words. Here is a short continuous passage containing three examples of the nuisance. I italicise the words in question:

> The only person who had the information to understand the full drama of the situation was Gracie: Colonel Miltiades Vaiden and his white negro son riding away with a horse and two mules to maintain the *octoroon's* property rights in a wagon. Gracie knew of the relationship, but fear at what would happen prevented the *quadroon* from appreciating its brackish irony.
>
> The *cream-coloured woman* stood in the weed-choked gate of the manor. . . .

This passage is merely baffling until, from his knowledge of the story, the reader has decided that the *octoroon* referred to is the "white negro son"; that the *quadroon* is none other than the very Gracie mentioned in the previous sentence; and, to come to the crowning absurdity, that Gracie, and the quadroon, and the cream-coloured woman, are not three persons but one person. Why not "her" and "she"? What have these pronouns done that they should be so cruelly ostracised? This is Elegant Variation with a vengeance. But all this does not alter the fact that *The Store* is a rich, generous, and intensely imagined fiction.

Mrs. Haldane's second novel, as readers of her first will have expected, reveals a very acute intelligence. The heroine, Michal, is an Anglo-French woman-journalist; and the book opens with her arrival in Paris. She is in love with Jean. On page 16 the question arises (in the mind of the reader) whether this Jean is a girl with a Scotch name, or a Frenchman, and the question is not answered till page 19, when the use of a masculine pronoun enlightens us. James Dowd, a drunken singer, comes into Michal's life and bed. James is in love with Michal; and young Dennis is (homosexually and unavailingly) in love with James. The dramatic theme tends to be rather smothered by irrelevant dialogue, but some people may find the dialogue worth while for its own sake. Dennis, the degenerate, is portrayed without moral bias; but after his suicide he is grossly sentimentalised. This is a pity, for Michal is very far from being a fool. "Really all the song and dance we make about life," she reflects, "is a struggle between our living and our dead selves." A pregnant

remark. And: "One cannot possess another living creature; the attempt to do so is far more suicidal than murderous." There is much in the book that is of this admirable quality.

Mr. Ernest Bramah has written a complete novel in the character of the charming and verbose Kai Lung. The chapter-headings alone are worth the money. "The imperishable Sovereign of the land and the all-powerful Mandarin T'sin Wong having been duly mentioned, the feeble but conscientious recorder of authentic facts discloses the position affecting those of less importance." This is the authentic voice; but, good though the joke is, I confess that in reading these 300 pages I sometimes find myself desiring a more expeditious method of narration. At the opposite pole of method is *Barred*, Mr. Edouard de Nève's stark and terrible record of life in a French prison and of the sequel. It is written from the heart with a most effective simplicity—a heartrending, an infuriating document, and one which everybody should count it a social duty to read.

GERALD BULLETT.

RUNNING OVER TO PARIS

The English Traveller in France, 1698-1815. Edited by CONSTANTIA MAXWELL. Routledge. 15s.

"Running over to Paris" has been for two hundred years one of the primal needs of the average Englishman: and in this very amusing volume Miss Maxwell, the erudite editor of *Young's Tours*, has collected a little anthology of the tripper's experiences. The most appalling moments in the lives of Englishmen have been those not infrequent periods when, owing to wars, revolutions or crashing currencies, they have been unable to indulge in their favourite pursuit. The very moment the war to end war against the damned Frenchman is over, the high road from Calais is black with the carriages of Englishmen *en route* for their spiritual home. In the two years following the Peace of Paris, it is reckoned that forty thousand Englishmen had passed through Calais. Nor did the more savage wars of the Revolution fill the average Englishman with distaste for the blood-stained capital. By the autumn following the Peace of Amiens, twelve thousand Englishmen had visited Paris, and to shake hands with the First Consul had become a boiling ambition in the breast of every mugwump.

To read this book is to be convinced that the present Anglo-French situation is what it has always been. The mutual attraction and repulsion have been constant. In the eighteenth century the journey was, of course, even more uncomfortable than it is to-day, and the English traveller arrived at Calais with his nerves thoroughly rasped. He had perhaps taken three days over the crossing in a beastly cabin and then been compelled to land from a small rowing-boat. The Hôtel Dessein, which yawned to engulf the exhausted traveller, was the first "Palace" ever to be built.

> It had a hundred and thirty beds and nearly half that number of indoor servants. A theatre and shop were attached. There was a large courtyard and excellent garden.

M. Dessein was also obliging enough to change English money; so that after his first experience of being cheated over the exchange the Englishman left the hotel in a thundering temper. The French, on the other hand, blamed the English, who were, they affirmed, abominably ostentatious and would collect mobs in the streets by throwing money from the windows. Needless to say the most experienced travellers know of other hotels, far cheaper, quieter and nicer in every way than the Dessein and would exasperate their less sophisticated fellow countrymen by the superior air with which they imparted this information.

The next business was to get to Paris. The public diligence was generally reckoned impossible, and the average Englishman travelled post. However, the true Francophil put up with the discomfort of the diligence, explaining that this was much the best way to see the French, "especially if you know the language." An early nineteenth century traveller, Tytler, waxes lyrical over the joys of the diligence.

> Everything there is motion and joy. The coach generally holds from ten to twelve persons and with all is sufficiently roomy. The moment you enter, you are on terms of the most perfect familiarity with the whole set of your travelling companions. In an instant, every tongue is at work, and every individual bent on making themselves happy for the moment and contributing to the happiness of their fellow travellers. Talking, joking, laughing, singing, reciting, every enjoyment which is light and pleasurable, is instantly adopted.

Tytler and his young companion (a nephew of Sir Joshua Reynolds) made their contribution to the entertainment by giving a duet of Handel's.

On arriving at the metropolis, the Englishman would be much irritated by the number of compatriots he found already installed. "While I was in Paris," writes Douglas (1753), "I found it full of our countrymen: the plays and opera houses were crowded with them; and, wherever I turned, the sound of the English language met my ear." Walpole echoed his annoyance. "There are swarms of English here, but most of them are going, to my great satisfaction. . . . It was certainly not to see my countrymen that I came to live here." And Walpole utters another protest, which has, since, been frequently repeated.

> It is indeed surprising to see the English so fond of travelling, and yet when they are abroad they take little or no pains to make their journey useful. Whether it is owing to certain shyness in their tempers, or whether it arises from a want of acquaintance with the language of the country, it is certain that Englishmen in foreign countries seem to be most happy in the company of each other and in conversing in their mother tongue. They seldom think of obtaining an introduction to the natives and go home again admirably well versed in all the fashions, but ignorant of the manners; acquainted with the management of the theatres, but uninformed with respect to the leaders at Court.

Still, the Englishman, however narrow his interests, enjoyed himself very well in Paris. The Frenchman's interest in abstract ideas was commented upon with approval. The exhibitions were generally reckoned superior, and the theatres notable not only for the excellence of the performance but for the intelligent appreciation of the audience. But above all the Frenchman "knew how to live."

Cafés, cabarets, Bœufs-sur-le-toit, Grands Eearts, good cheap wine and decent coffee were as much appreciated after the Peace of Paris as after the Treaty of Versailles. We also learn that in the opinion of old stagers the Riviera had been completely ruined by 1750 and that, even then, the valley of the Loire was packed with young English cubs learning the excellent French talked in that fruitful land. Probably many English boys were sent there for the same reason as they are to-day (according to my own parents' unwilling admission). It was not so much love of a pure accent as hatred of vice and dissipation that caused English parents to send their boys to Tours rather than Paris.

Once home, the tourist had mixed feelings about his trip. He had enjoyed himself thoroughly, but somehow "he had not liked the French." But here he was sure to be snubbed by someone else present, who would explain that he had evidently not got to know the nicest sort of French person, who is indeed most difficult to get to know. He, the interrupter, had had that advantage. The first man collapsed, and the second monopolised the conversation.

The Frenchman on his side saw the Englishman go home again without breaking his heart. It was nice to have your country to yourself. But then the bad days came and the barbarians were missed. An anonymous lady, one of the rare travellers during the Napoleonic war, recounts the following remarkable incident.

> At the Inn of Clermont in the Department of Oise the inn mistress violently abused the Revolution, lamenting "que la profession était bien tombée. Car," she added with a sigh, "nous ne voyons plus de guinées, depuis que les Anglais, les chers Anglais, ne voyagent plus."

Altogether Miss Maxwell has produced a delightful book.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

THE UNIVERSAL CIVILISATION

The Civilisation of France. An Introduction by ERNST ROBERT CURTIUS. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.

Just as Dibelius wrote on the English, so now another German professor essays the simpler task of writing on the French. Herr Curtius has made a neat and concise job of his survey of the French national character and its exposition through the several channels of social life and custom, history, religion, educational system, and the crystallisation of all these into the many-faceted jewel called Paris, that city *par excellence* surrounded by an unreachable chaos of suburbs.

Herr Curtius's task was easier because by contrast with the English the French character is explicit and fully conscious of itself. One of the most emphatic points brought out by Herr Curtius is the way in which this French character has expressed itself, indeed, half made itself, by an intense nationalism, that

spirit which at the moment is making France thoroughly hated by the European peoples who are trying to knit the broken world together by means of economic principles and practices. No country is more economical than France, for she is composed of thrifty people, most of them smallholders with a strong sense of property. But for the newer economics, which thinks in terms of international organisation and mass production, France has a femininely logical contempt. That is why her food and drink are so good, and also why she is such a disconcerting neighbour.

These are typical characteristics which have moved Herr Curtius to seek for historical and philosophical causes. He has shown how French nationalism has grown out of the Romanised Gallic people after their absorption of the Franks. Circumstances apparently favoured the consolidation of that family spirit. Roman social orderliness never died out of the Gallic communities, who at the critical time in the Middle Ages when civilised Europe was being divided between the Empire and the Papacy, remained intact through the fortunate chance that the Capetian kings of France produced male heirs without a break from the 9th to the 13th centuries. So stabilised did this community of the Gallic people become, and so great was the Roman cultural tradition which it accumulated, that gradually the national sense was identified with the idea of civilisation. Herr Curtius points out that few Europeans, and particularly the English and Germans, who are racial in their outlook, can realise how completely identical are the terms " national " and " civilised " to a Frenchman. His conception of France is of a system of culture that includes politics, religion, art, science, education, and even domestic management. That last phrase could not have been introduced by a Frenchman. Only an English observer used to the ghastly discomforts of English catering, that devil's junket of puritanical laws and inborn tendency toward squalor, could be surprised by the idea of food, its cooking and eating, being part of the ritual of culture. But France has inherited direct from classical Rome a sense of the importance of the daily comforts of life. As Herr Curtius says, " In France civilisation begins with food," and he gives a picture of a restaurant in a French provincial town on market day. " One's place is assigned and the meal begins. To all the same menu is given. But this menu has six courses. It is constructed according to the classic rules of tradition. These are as fixed and as unalterable as those of grammar. And the peasant or the manual labourer takes it all as much as a matter of course as does the elegant Parisian lady at the next table."

So Herr Curtius finally proves that the whole of the French civilisation, synonymous with nationalism, is founded upon an aesthetic sense, a sense so strong that religions and wars have left it unchanged. Catholicism in France has always been French, as the Popes have bitterly realised throughout the history of the Church. This sense has made the French impervious to racial feelings. They are not interested in " Nordic " or " Latin " problems, or " colour bars," because such distinctions are capable of being eliminated by solution in French culture. This tradition has made France the most comfortable country in the world. Everything is so well ordered, so reasonable, so full of a rare grace. It is good to live there.

But on the other hand this sense of tradition and excellence makes France isolated, intolerant of new ideas, of foreign customs and of anything that cannot be explained in terms of one or other of the many departments of her national mind. That is why she looks upon the English and the Germans as barbarians, who revel in their heavy sciences, their machine-made food, their stodgy philosophies, and their morbid interest in religious novelties. If we can understand this outlook, we can appreciate why France regards any attack on herself as an attack on the best aspirations of the human race, and why during the last war she felt that civilisation had crashed.

Since the French conception of the right life is fundamentally an aesthetic one, her most natural means of expression is rhetorical and literary. Herr Curtius has enlarged very convincingly on this theme, and shown how this factor has influenced education and the study of philosophy in France. The Frenchman's demand for literary clarity and distinction in the conveying of ideas dominates the whole educational system, and enforces a certain cut-and-dried quality in the work of French philosophers. Nobody is read in France who is not immediately intelligible to the averagely educated man, Descartes is their great philosopher because he wrote with grace and could be understood. Comte wrote badly and therefore was neglected. Herr Curtius shows the dangers of this virtuous restriction; " philosophy can only be supreme where it can roam freely through unexplored spaces without let or hindrance. That is why philosophy can only play a secondary part in the intellectual life of France."

I have indicated only a few of the many facets of French life and character which Herr Curtius has dealt with in this book, which he so modestly calls " fragmentary and experimental." Incidentally he has painted delightful pictures of Paris and the French provinces, relating the two to each other in all their aspects; historical, geographical and social. Paris, the beloved city, really lives in his enthusiastic pages—that is, so far as such a divine and elusive goddess can be limned by any individual mortal.

RICHARD CHURCH.

WHO IS IT?

They Winter Abroad. By JAMES ASTON. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

There are many fascinating games which can be played with literature and, in a well-furnished library, one of the best is attributions. Someone reads aloud passages by Hudson, Hazlitt and Sir Thomas Browne and one attributes them to Beckford, Borrow and Sir Thomas Browne—the one author it is always possible to identify. I am rather good at this game, my greatest feat being deducing that a passage was by Charles Reade, none of whose works I had ever read.

They Winter Abroad presents us with a perfect subject for this amusement, for we are told that James Aston is the pen name of someone whose other work we have all read. It is not, of course, for a reviewer to guess and give a solution. If he fails he will have covered himself with ignominy and have involved himself awkwardly with a third party who did not write the book, and if he succeeds everyone will say he had private sources of information and is a cad to have given the secret away.

What makes the problem so hard a one is the extraordinary brilliance of the book. It blazes, it corruscates with wit and with big and little jokes of every sort, and reading it one pulls one's hair and groans:

" Dear old A——. I remember him as funny, but surely never as brilliant as this." And a rapid survey of his last two books proves not only that he wasn't but that he never could be. No, not till pigs have wings.

Please realise that this is the most improper way to read or to review a work of art. Who cares if Mr. Aston is Tom, Dick or Harry, Meggy or Peggy? Who cares? Read it and review it on its merits. And just after that virtuous resolution comes the joke which eclipses all other jokes and after howling and screaming for half an hour one re-emerges like a suffocating whale and exclaims: " At all events he has never done anything as good as this before."

A pseudonym has given Mr. Aston a new freedom like a mask at a carnival: freedom to write as he speaks, to make any joke

"BP"
PLUS
Plus what?
Plus a little something some others haven't got

which comes into his head, to split an infinitive and to say anything he likes about anything. It is glorious.

Of course, in these stuffy, stay-at-home, budget-balancing days, there is something improper in the very title of the book, which by all the laws of decency and patriotism should have been called: "They Winter in Devon." It would have been a very different work. For the novel is the description of the inhabitants of an hotel for English people in Italy and the effect which the southern spring-time has upon them, awakening desires which have been dormant during the winter.

Sex. Yes, indeed.

Not long ago a Royal Duke stated that he didn't care for novels about sex, or that there was too much sex in novels, which may have reminded some of his audience of the lines about Miss Beale and Miss Buss, but Mr. Aston has not taken the hint. At all events, he has not managed to minimise the subject. All nature stirs and quickens, the sun shines, the flowers shamelessly open their corollas promiscuously to every passing, repulsive-looking insect, the birds sing and mate, lizards sun themselves and look about for other lizards—and the poor English, creaking like rusty stag-beetles, pour unfortunate confidences into each other's unwilling ears. And that is all. There is a seduction and a suicide but neither is in the least essential to a book whose greatest merit is that one may say about all the characters what the author says of the poor fat Miss Cowfolds: "Like all people outside of books they were lovable or pitiable—which is not only akin, but the same thing when understood."

Yes, they are like people outside of books and only in two cases can I criticise their reality. Mr. McInvert seems to me to be a figure from the past, not very likely to be met with to-day, and his emotions a little out of date. Miss Albino is sometimes caricatured and treated unfairly, though she recovers her reality. This is a great pity because the other characters are not caricatures at all.

But the wit, the brilliance, the jokes! Come, Highbrows, come, gather and fall shamelessly upon the feast.

DAVID GARNETT.

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COUNTRY DAYS

Wold Without End. By H. J. MASSINGHAM. Cobden-Sanderson. 10s. 6d.

Escape—whether from reality itself, or merely from the inevitable circumstances attendant upon it—has always been man's most unfailing necessity, and that compulsion is upon us still, and is grown not weaker, but stronger, since the days when we fled into a damp cave from the thunder of a pursuing demon, or could forget the world in the walled security of a cloister. But there is not only escape *from*, there is also, and has always been, escape towards, whether it be but a leap from the frying-pan into the fire, or the more effective clinging of Orestes to the image of Pallas. For Mr. Massingham escape is from the turmoil of our cities; from the exigencies of brain and toil, to the Cotswolds. The fault of most Englishmen is that when they flee they flee away—abroad, to the sophistications of the Mediterranean, or the gaiety of foreign capitals. Mr. Massingham has lived for a whole year now near Chipping Campden, and has written something between an informal biography and a volume of country life, with each chapter devoted to a single month of the year. Antæus-like, he is returned to Earth—and to his own earth, and there daily, hourly, he has renewed his strength. And the earth has fulfilled for him the promise *ego ero tibi merces magna!* His book is not only an exquisite piece of writing, it is the most comforting, the most hopeful book that has been written since Richard Jefferies died. They are many who thought the country in England existed no longer—had been buried deep under arterial roads, by-passes, petrol pumps and teas, with all their ghastly paraphernalia of bungalows and advertisements; but whoever reads Mr. Massingham will know how untrue are such fears; his account of spring's coming is almost painful in its reality: we feel it is too hard that his old apple is breaking into leaf again, and we not there to see. Until the eighteenth century spring could not come, unperceived by millions of human beings, as it does to-day, and when we read *Wold Without End*, we must realise that this is the greatest of our mistakes, and the most irremediable—this divorcing of ourselves from the sequences of nature. We must agree with Mr. Massingham that sorrow, and only sorrow, can come from the severing of our relations with our natural surroundings. "Nature would have none of us sorrowful, and it is just and seemly it should be so. Grief was not of the fertilising stuff that bore us humans. Our aboriginal travail was in joy and all its questing energies, and if the soul cannot share this universal possession let it hide itself." But this is no mere nature-diary; it is a whole philosophy and a history too, full of aboriginal humour, and of stories both wise and merry about the Cotswold natives. If Mr. Massingham has a fault it is that he is sometimes affected, his writing is occasionally a trifle *voulu*—in spite of the poet's scorn it is often better that "a primrose by the river's brim" should be a yellow primrose, and nothing more. A small fault, however, in a writer who has about him something of the glory that was about Thomas Traherne.

PICTURES OF DOGS

Big Dogs and Little Dogs. By HEDDA WALTHER. Routledge. 3s. 6d.

It does not really matter very much who, or what, sits before Hedda Walther's camera. It is a magic machine that is strangely blind to the mask we call identity—the individuality we often so rashly demand of shadows. Her lens does not, in fact, see the personal shadow, or record any Portrait: it sees simply the common denominator; it sees the wild thing called life that travels about the world dressed in skin or fur or feathers or scales, and can never—between birth and death—merge into the living oblivion that is its natural air. It sees the prisoner, life, leaning out of eyes. Manfred Georg, in a rather uninspired preface, calls attention to the fact that this book is really a book of eyes. Dogs' eyes are unlike the eyes of any other creature, since dogs are doomed to live in a world that is beyond their understanding—and they are doomed to understand that they don't understand. In some moods they are *almost* wild animals and in some *almost* tame men. This *almost-man* look—this signal, "Oh I *can't*, I almost can but I can't *quite*. . . ." Hedda Walther's camera occasionally sees with the most un-machinelike sympathy, so that the instinct of one turning the pages is to cry, "All right—all right, I've seen your signal, I'm on your side. . . ." The Pekingese eyes, the bulldog eyes, the eyes of

the fine dog whose unworthy caption is "Knightly, defiant powerful"—and, above all, the eyes of the springer spaniel on p. 15 seem to send this desperate message from the page. Less disturbing are the serenely wild and relaxed eyes of the dogs who "don't give a damn." Of all the dogs in this book, the Scotch terrier refrains most emphatically from giving a damn.

The titles under the photographs seem neither necessary nor significant.

STELLA BENSON.

LAW AND PREJUDICE

English Law and its Background. By C. H. S. FIFOOT. Bell. 10s. 6d.

Our legal system is too complex to yield its secrets to the uninitiated; and Mr. Fifoot has performed a real service in describing its essential principles so that he who runs may read. The great virtue of this book is its emphasis upon the social background in which the main doctrines developed. They are thus explained, not as the outcome of some preordained philosophy of the Common Law, which, set up in the sky, is brought down to earth by the judges as occasion warrants, but as intelligible responses to fill needs. So explained, doctrines like those of vicarious liability, the nature of legal malice, the place of public policy in the interpretation of contracts, cease to be mysteries to the layman. And since Mr. Fifoot always writes with clarity and distinction, and without that excessive addiction to the parade of learning which lawyers love, his book is also a pleasure to read. It deserves a wide public.

There is, however, one attitude of mind in Mr. Fifoot's book in which it is difficult not to feel that his professionial zeal has outrun his intellectual discretion. He dismisses with impatience a suggestion of Mr. Cole's that the judicial attitude to Trade Unions has been governed by a dislike of their effort. He seeks to perpetuate the ancient myth that the judges are a body of amazingly impartial persons, remarkably unaffected by the social environment of their time. It is difficult to believe that Mr. Fifoot is so simple. Doctrines like those of Common Employment, the interpretation of statutes like those dealing with Workmen's Compensation, or those which confer quasi-judicial powers on government departments, to take only random illustrations, are inexplicable except upon the hypothesis that judicial decisions are born of what Mr. Justice Holmes has happily termed the "inarticulate major premiss" in the judge's mind. Let any reader study the judgments of the House of Lords in *Roberts* v. *Hopwood*, or of King's Bench in *R.* v. *Lyon*, and he will find it difficult indeed not to conclude that they take their colour from a definite political philosophy not necessarily related to the statutory intention which they interpret. Neither Mr. Cole, nor anyone who shares his views, regards this as sinister. It is merely the expression of the fact that the judge makes his interpretation of law serve an end he believes to be wise. In a capitalist society, he will attribute wisdom to a capitalist interpretation of the law; and our existing rules of statutory interpretation maximise his opportunity of doing so. How, otherwise, Mr. Fifoot can reconcile the attitude of the Courts in the famous Mogul case, on the one hand, and, say, *Lumley* v. *Gye* on the other, I do not know. In the one case the House of Lords broadly said that a company can do anything to its rival if the result is more business for itself; in the other it laid down grim limitations upon similar practices by the Trade Unions. Mr. Cole, in a word, merely put with pungency what most people, outside the legal profession, know only too well; and, had he wished, he could have prayed in aid as compurgators men not less eminent than Mr. Justice Holmes, Sir Frederick Pollock, and the late Professor Geldart. I do not, indeed, know how an adequate theory of judicial decision can be constructed except in terms of the economic interpretation of history. Mr. Fifoot, seemingly, disagrees. I hope that, in a later edition of his book, he will provide us with a reasoned alternative.

HAROLD J. LASKI.

SHORTER NOTICES

Purposive Behaviour in Animals and Men. By EDWARD C. TOLMAN. Appleton. 18s.

The behaviourist always labours under the disadvantage that his method of inquiry leads inevitably to a rather tiresome stressing of the obvious, and many readers of Professor Tolman's otherwise arresting introduction to his conception of behaviour will find many of his illustrations redundant. Professor Tolman joins issue with Watson and other behaviourists, over their description of behaviour in terms of simple stimulus—response connection. He holds that what the psychologist is immediately concerned with is "behaviour acts" due to unit response of the whole organism, regardless of the fact that this response is itself admittedly due to an immensely complicated series of muscular, neural, and glandular responses. In this respect his argument is akin to that of Marston and King, who in their *Integrative Psychology* insist upon this "unit response" as the physiological fact that matters. Professor Tolman is an anti-mentalist, and when he uses the words "purpose" and "cognition" he uses them strictly in a Pickwickian sense, as signifying something to be derived from observation and not from introspection.

The Citadel of Ethiopia. By MAX GHÜHL. Cape. 15s.

This story of an expedition—partly scientific, partly commercial—into the Highlands of Abyssinia gives a lively account of the native peoples, Semitic, Hamitic and Negroid, which is the more valuable for being the work of a trained observer. The book, however, is written frankly for the general reader, and deals only cursorily with the anthropometric work of the expedition. Perhaps the most interesting chapter is that which deals with Kafa—the district which gave its name to coffee—where there exists a cult involving the worship of a god, Heko, identified by Herr Ghühl with the Egyptian god, Hechu. There are some strong notes on the slave trade which is still prevalent. The book is well illustrated.

The Life of the Butterfly. By FRIEDRICH SCHNACK. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

The naturalist, the collector and the lover of beauty will derive pleasure from this study of the lives and metamorphoses of butterflies and moths, but their pleasure is not likely to be enhanced by Herr Schnack's lyrical flights, which are very unlike the flights of his beloved insects. In the middle of a scientific note, or at the close of a brilliant description, he will burst into that kind of poetry which, as Silas Wegg put it, has a weakening effect upon the mind. Apart, however, from these inconsequent and spasmodic lyrical outbursts, the little book has both charm and merit; such descriptions, for instance, as that of a great flight of Purple Emperors drinking at the fountain of an ancient German town, would endear the writer to any lover of the beautiful.

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Drawn from Life. By S. J. WOOLF. McGraw-Hill Publishing Co. 25s.

With his pencils, technical and reporter's, Mr. Woolf stalks the great ones of the earth. He will not let his lines speak for themselves, is apt to over-emphasise, both in charcoal and ink, the admirability of his Red Admirals. It no longer astounds us, if ever it did, to be informed that Mr. Shaw can exude benevolence. We can even believe that the taciturn Coolidge might be talkative on occasion, since legends are mainly for popular consumption. Mr. Woolf appears to pose his sitters, and then to ply them (and himself) with a questionnaire. What constitutes greatness? Why are they great? Capability of itself is not sufficient, he muses. Luck must be in attendance, and it must secure recognition. Mr. Woolf can illuminate his specimens. The Scot in Mr. MacDonald he brings out well. Sir Thomas Lipton "Scotch-Irish or Irish-Scotch, depending upon what country I'm in," is characteristic in his "No one can live in Glasgow and not love the water." Briand, Matisse, Paderewski, Toscanini, AE., Stresemann, Chesterton, Jeans, all expound their views on life and art.

Sobieski, King of Poland. By J. B. MORTON. Eyre & Spottiswoode. 10s. 6d.

Mr. Morton's book is the first full-length biography of Sobieski to appear in this country. That one should have been so long delayed is strange, because from the time of Alexander Tyler's long contemporary poem on him, Sobieski has never lacked appreciation here. The delay has given Mr. Morton a fair field and has enabled him to study a wealth of unfamiliar material. Yet the historian's dream of putting Sobieski inside his environment of undocumented intrigue is obviously incapable of being realised. He stands out as an isolated figure from the European scene. Mr. Morton's interpretation of his character emphasises his isolation, and the unquestionably heroic, almost legendary, qualities of his character and exploits. But our curiosity about this extraordinary man is not entirely satisfied. The information we possess about his contact with his fellows is incomplete. The result is that his story, with the possible exception of the early episode of his fighting with the Swedes against the Poles, appears as an unrelieved history of the one just man in the land of wickedness and absurdity. The melancholy paradox abides that Sobieski could save Europe from the Turks, but could not save Poland from itself. Mr. Morton has made good use of Sobieski's letters to his French-ridden wife, previously unprinted in England, and of his *crescendo* provided by the Vienna siege, which is most admirably described.

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About Motoring

A NEW AUSTIN

SIR HERBERT AUSTIN is one of several British manufacturers who supply motorists with maximum value at a minimum price. An engineer who labours in this field has little scope for originality. His chief efforts must be concentrated on simplifying production, and especially on reducing labour costs to a point as near zero per chassis as his genius can command. There are an amazing number of parts in a 10 h.p. saloon car, equipped with the lavish supply of accessories which the modern market requires. Many of these items, including such expensive gear as the tyres, ignition, and instruments, have to be purchased ready-made. Selling costs are enormous. No new model can be successfully launched without the expenditure of thousands of pounds in buying advertisement space in newspapers. The retailers have to be remunerated for supplementing the "net" of the front page by the "hook and line" of personal appeals to individuals, and for cosseting awkward individuals after purchase. It is extraordinarily difficult for one giant factory, absorbed in this very difficult and precarious trade, to establish any vantage over its rivals. It is not certain that Sir Herbert can claim any such vantage on the home market, though he is supreme on the international market, where no foreign factory pays royalties to his rivals, though the Austin Seven is built under licence by three great car-designing nations, who find it better to borrow Sir Herbert's brains than to rely on their own. If he has any advantage here at home, it is one of stamina. My acquaintance includes a self-made man who is very rich, but has never shaken off the complex of his youthful struggles sufficiently to become extravagant. To this day he never wastes a copper; and he is still travelling in an Austin Twenty built not many years after the Armistice. When his opulent friends chaff him, he remarks with perfect truth that it is as fast as he desires; as reliable as a car can be; as comfortable as any of their recent £3,000 vehicles, and that he intends to drive it to destruction. So far as a personal opinion is worth anything, I think the cheap Austins are a shade more durable that most of the rivals.

In the face of the present trade depression the motor factory can exist only by selling small and cheap cars; no firm can hope to dispose of any decent number of medium or large cars at corresponding prices. In order to snatch every available sale all the big plants are forced to produce light cars of every conceivable size and price from 7 h.p. to 16 h.p. and from £100 to £250. Hitherto there has been a gap in the Austin range—there was no car answering to Sir William Morris's famous "Cowley" models, and a certain number of sales were thereby sacrificed. The new "Ten-Four" is intended to caulk this leak. It is in no sense a petty inflation of the famous seven, but ranks as a completely new model. No range of coachwork is offered, for single-model production gives the public the best value. The Ten-Four is a saloon de luxe, with sliding roof, four-cylinder engine, twin-top four-speed gear box, and complete equipment, catalogued at £168, and must be welcomed as remarkable value. Its purchase price and running costs are only fractionally greater than the corresponding figures for the popular midget saloons, and both in performance and comfort it surpasses the baby cars by a good margin.

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The road performance is quite good. Like most Austin designs, it is not exceptionally fast, and the car is unlikely to reach 60 on the flat, even when it is run in. Fifty is the pleasant maximum, though 56 m.p.h. is obtainable. The third gear is slow, being unequal to 40 m.p.h., but its low ratio makes for first-class climbing, and the Austin refusal to crowd speed into a small engine is amply compensated by the extreme smoothness of all

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their power units. This power unit is mounted with precisely the right degree of flexibility; a four-cylinder unit necessarily lacks the balance of a six, but this engine consumes its own vibration, and there is no trace of door or window or dash drumming at any engine speed required in neutral or on the road. Mechanically, the car is an excellent job, and as it is taxed at no more than £10, and runs 35 miles on a gallon, it is cheap.

The suspension is good, affording comfort on roughish straights without any wandering or rolling on corners. The long rear springs pass beneath the axle, and reverse their camber under load. Andre shock-absorbers are used. The steering benefits by the suspension, and has a very good lock. A trial run suggests that the car would acquit itself admirably in the Alps, as the radiator keeps remarkably cool.

The unusual frame and spring design make it possible to construct a roomy body without footwells. The propeller-shaft casing traverses the floors of both compartments, but is raised above the level of the body side-bearers. It is, of course, possible to stumble against this casing when crossing the body from one side to the other. But this is infinitely preferable to the common practice of setting the shaft-casing level with the side-bearers, and utilising a pair of deep footwells. The floor of the rear compartment is flush with the side-bearers; the passenger does not step over the sidebearer and down into a well, for the whole floor is flat, except for the small excrescence of the shaft casing.

The body lines are pleasant without any special distinction: pressed steel is the method of construction. The saloon is of the four-light type, with very shallow "blind" panels at the rear above the waistline. The windscreen is slightly sloped towards the stern. The running boards lie an inch or two below hub centres and the step or valance between running board and floor is a mere sill, perhaps 2in. deep. There is a wide rear window to assist in reversing, and its blind is controlled by the driver. Equipment includes bumpers, electric screen-wiper, petrol gauge, interior mirror, and the usual instruments. Choice of several colour schemes is offered.

Nobody can pick any holes in the design, and it is perfectly safe to prophesy great popularity for this car. It probably represents the best value for money ever offered in this country.

R. E. DAVIDSON.

"But what made you so sure he was innocent?"

"You will remember that I examined our host's bathroom. I found there a purple tube of shaving cream and recently-used shaving materials. That decided the matter."

"You amaze me Holmes," said I, "surely you are—"

"My dear Watson" interrupted Holmes impatiently, "You are singularly obtuse this morning. As you know, I later discovered that the deed was committed just before breakfast—the time when shaving has put irritable men into a mood of violence. But I saw our friend was accustomed to use Parke-Davis Shaving Cream. He also had a good brush and keen razor blades. His shaving would therefore be a pleasure—he could not fail to be in a good humour before breakfast. In such a mood it was impossible for him to commit a crime."

"You are wonderful," I cried, "Your merits like those of Parke-Davis Shaving Cream should be publicly recognised."

* * *

If shaving makes you feel murderous, you need Parke-Davis Shaving Cream. Buy a tube from your Chemist for 1/6; or send for a free sample from Dept. C.D., Parke, Davis & Co., 50, Beak Street, London, W.1.

Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

No. 7.—THE MAD MILLIONAIRES

Two Chicago millionaires, Blosheim and Blum, are both anxious to get married. Neither, unfortunately, is physically attractive and their overtures are consistently rejected.

Eventually, however, Blosheim makes the following terms with six young ladies working for a film corporation at Hollywood:

For six nights running one of the six will meet Blosheim at an agreed rendezvous for dinner. He will not be told beforehand which of the six it is to be. Each night he will take with him a sealed envelope containing one of these ladies' names, and will deposit it on his companion's plate. If, when she opens the envelope, she finds her own name there, it is agreed that she will marry him.

There is nothing to debar any one of the young ladies from appearing more than once at the rendezvous.

Blum, impressed by the terms of this ingenious, and indeed thrilling, gamble, makes a somewhat similar arrangement. In his case, however, his choice is limited to five young ladies; he is only allowed three opportunities of writing down the correct name; and it is agreed that the same lady cannot meet him more than once.

Which of these two lunatics has the better chance of getting married, and what are the chances that two bachelors return to Chicago?

PROBLEM 5
PLUTOCRATS AT PLAY

This problem can only be solved empirically. The solution turns on the calculation of Goldstein's lead at the thirteenth hole. It will be found (by experiment) that Goldstein must have been 4 up at the thirteenth, having lost the 1st, 3rd and 4th; halved the 2nd, 5th and 10th, and won the remainder. Hence he was 6 up at the 15th. Thus he won £21 on each of the last 3 holes (£63 on the three), whereas, had Snagg won them, he (Goldstein) would on these three holes have been only £31 up; and thus the three missed putts cost Snagg £32.

Appreciative comments on this problem are hereby acknowledged with thanks.

Points awarded to:

Dr. L. C. Adam, Arlyn, Asquitha, M. S. Amos, Agitat, F. G. Adamson, H. N. Briggs, D. Barber, Blind Mole, J. Bourne, B. Brewster, J. H. Bell, A. L. Bulley, Dr. Brooke, V. Butler, I. Baker, D. M. Cheke, J. B. Channon, A. Classe, A. Crokingburn, Cooper, R. M. Crosskey, Crooked Dean, L. C. Clarke, P. R. Couch, T. W. Chaundy, A. M. Carstairs, Rev. C. Dinwoodie, Didymus, C. M. Douglas, V. J. D., Elemel, R. C. Evans, T. Faint, M. Fleming, G. F. Goodman, G. Goodall, E. C. I. Garner, W. P. Hudson, Initio, A. J., F. L. Jones, A. C. Lynch, A. J. Merriles, R. M. G. MacD., H. Moore, R. H. Millward, J. P. McEvoy, F. S. M., F. Morrell, G. P. Meredith, Mercutio, Macbeth, F. E. Maitland, L. R. M., J. L. Mackenzie, W. B. Owen, W. Oldham, W. O'Dea, G. O. Pike, J. Procter, Mrs. Ponsonby, J. L. Priston, G. C. Potter, P. M. Rose, Rigel, J. A. Roberts, L. G. Roussin, M. Ross, L. R., J. Ross, Remaur, G. G. Robb, Roscoe, S. T. S., F. P. Streeten, Silex, D. G. Sopwith, Major Sandison, W. A. Sledge, Seiss, G. Sharp, Thoriger, W. S. Tracey, A. S. Tennant, H. G. Taylor, J. Tutin, Henry Vine, H. Vallance, Van der Reit, B. Willis, W. A. Whitehouse, D. Wildman, G. F. Williams, Vic Waldron, C. H. Waddington, Zylo.

Additional solutions: Problems 2, 3: A. Rotenberg; Problem 4: Van der Reit.

DR. ZBYSCO.

Four or five solvers (for whose letters I am grateful) find my solution "improbable." The points raised are: (1) Borer had only four minutes in which to do the deed; (2) how did the unfortunate Zbysco get off the train? (3) How could the body be returned to the train at Clutter? The answers: (1) Admitted, but surely four minutes is enough. (2) Zbysco might well have arranged to meet Borer in the booking-office. (3) Surely not impossible (though risky) using the offside of the train; and given a dark night, a lonely station, and an accomplice on board! The train stopped for five minutes and no one saw Borer get in.

This solution is consistent with the whole of the data that are *necessarily* in the hands of the police. They must know if the train had stopped between stations; they need not be certain of, e.g., Zbysco's intentions.

I sympathise with my critics, but would point out that the solution of a problem having in part a factual basis necessarily involves some element of arbitrariness. My aim, I can assure them, is to reduce this element to the narrowest limits consistent with variety in the problems.

Competitors for the Quarterly Prize are reminded that solutions (on **foolscap**, and with names and addresses clearly shown) must reach this office, addressed to *Caliban*, not later than midday on the **following** Thursday. Consideration, however, will be given to competitors residing abroad; every effort will be made to enable them to participate.

CALIBAN.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR

INFLATION TALK—GOVERNMENT FUNDS AT 4 PER CENT.—HOME RAILS

THIS call for inflation from the Conservative backwoods and the camp fires of the Chief Crusader is all very well, but it does not carry us very far. It is interesting chiefly for the display of dislike which the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street inspires. When Sir Robert Horne declares that the Bank of England is the servant of the Government, it becomes clear that the Socialist policy for the nationalisation of that ancient institution would meet with the hearty approval of the Right. And there was never any doubt about the moral support of the chairman of the Midland Bank. But this inflation talk comes to very little. There is only one sure way of starting an inflationary rise in prices. That is by letting the Fiduciary Issue go hang, by printing more notes each week and handing them out to Government and municipal employees as extra wages or to the unemployed as extra doles. (It need not be done so crudely as this, but the new notes must somehow be got into active circulation and not be hoarded.) Now this direct kind of inflation is funked by Sir Robert Horne and his supporters (I am not sure about Lord Beaverbrook) and, as everyone remembers what happened to Germany under the great inflation, I do not suppose it will ever be adopted in this country. But it is interesting to see that a similar proposal in the United States commanded a good deal of serious support—namely, the encashment of $2,000 millions of War Veterans Bonus certificates.

* * *

The indirect form of inflation which Sir Robert Horne and Mr. Reginald McKenna (*vide* the latest Review of the Midland Bank) are at pains to recommend is merely an expansion of bank credit. Only the amateur would argue that an increase in bank credit automatically raises commodity prices. The Federal Reserve Board have found out that they can buy $100 millions of U.S. Government securities each week without causing a ripple in the price level. In this country the inflation of credit may be brought about by the Bank of England reducing its discount rate and by buying securities, thus enlarging the "bankers' deposits" in its Banking Department. As everyone knows, deposits at the Bank of England are regarded by the joint stock banks as the equivalent of bank cash from which they can extend credit nearly ten-fold. I believe that a credit expansion policy is being pursued, somewhat fitfully and half-heartedly, by the Bank of England to-day. But to enlarge the basis of bank credit does not mean that this extra credit will actually be put into active use, if business confidence is completely lacking. Nor is it likely to be as long as the joint stock banks charge the now usurious minimum rate of 5 per cent. on all overdrafts. Even if we assume that extra bank credit will be utilised in trade, it will cause no lasting improvement in the price level unless the new money is spent on wages and other services—that is, unless it finds its way into the pockets of labour. If it goes merely to enlarge the profits of the entrepreneur, prices will ultimately fall again to their old level. We have therefore two difficult problems—(1) raising the price level, which means increasing purchasing power, and (2) maintaining the price level, which means keeping purchasing power constant. I do not think these problems will be solved without a complete abandonment of the gold standard system and without a thorough agreement between capital and labour as to the distribution of the profits of enterprise. If we are to have currency conferences they should begin in Great Britain, and the new standard for the £ sterling should be a composite commodity price index.

* * *

The gilt edged market has been celebrating the rise this week in 2½ per cent. Consols and 3½ per cent. Conversion to a 4 per cent. yield basis. Over the past month the yield on 3½ per cent. Conversion has been declining at the rate of 1s. per week. If this pace is maintained the long-dated British Government stocks will reach a 3¾ per cent. yield basis on June 15th and a 3½ per cent. basis by July 20th. So the Conversion scheme for 5 per cent. War Loan should not be far away. A firm of stockbrokers puts forward the interesting suggestion that the conversion of 5 per cent. War Loan might result in an inflationary expansion of credit. It is assumed that foreign banking support will be enlisted to take care of the foreign holdings of War Loan—variously estimated at from £200 to £400 millions—and that the banks and finance houses will be induced to convert by some concession over the tax on capital redemption profits. But there may be from £100 to £200 millions of British holdings which remain unconverted, requiring repayment in cash. The Government, it is suggested, should borrow temporarily from the Bank of England. The money borrowed would be used to repay the non-converters in cash and would automatically add to the deposits of the joint stock banks at the Bank of England. By thus broadening the basis of bank cash the operation would enable the joint stock banks to extend their credit facilities. There would be no rise in prices, of course, until the expanded credit had been utilised in payment for goods and services, but it would be a step in the right direction. Whatever happens, it would be wise not to delay the conversion of 5 per cent. War Loan unduly. Trade is badly in need of the stimulus it would give to new investment. Only by cheaper money, expanded credit, and a revival in the long-term capital market can domestic trade be developed, if we proceed along orthodox lines.

* * *

An announcement of the greatest importance to the railway market was made by Mr. William Whitelaw, chairman of the London & North Eastern Railway Company in a speech at West Hartlepool on Tuesday. He declared that his own company and the London Midland and Scottish were going to ask permission from Parliament to pool their competitive traffic. Some nervous traders would say: "Here is the beginning of monopoly." But would they rather have a prosperous railway service with a monopoly or an incompetent railway service with the old competition which ruined railway companies in the past? When they went to ask for this monopoly, Mr. Whitelaw added, it would be to carry goods by the shortest route and the cheapest way and not to sneak each other's traffic. Presumably the pooling arrangement will apply to both goods and passengers. The market was sensibly impressed and marked up the prices of the prior charges of the two companies. The following table shows the present market prices and yields:

	High. 1931.	Present Price.	Yield. Per cent. £ s. d.
DEBENTURES.			
L. & N.E., 4%	80½	72½	5 10 4
L.M. & S., 4%	82⅝	81	4 18 9
GUARANTEED.			
L. & N.E., 4%, 1st	75	57	7 0 4
L. & N.E., 4%, 2nd	67½	50	8 0 0
L.M. & S., 4%	78⅜	65½	6 2 2
PREFERENCE.			
L. & N.E., 4%, 1st	56⅜	31½	12 14 0
L. & N.E., 4%, 2nd	45⅛	16	—
L.M. & S., 4%	62⅜	38	10 10 6
L.M. & S., 4%, 1923	55⅜	25½	15 13 9

As regards the cover for these prior charges, the next table shows the decline in total receipts for the four groups for the first 16 weeks of this year:

	London, Midland and Scottish.	London and North-Eastern.	Great Western.	Southern.
		(In thousands of £'s.)		
1st 16 weeks, 1931	£18,699	£14,098	£7,803	£5,874
1st 16 weeks, 1932	17,399	12,851	7,244	5,406
1932 compared with 1931	−6.8%	−8.9%	−7.1%	−7.9%

How far further economies in expenditure and reduced wages bills have offset these declines is unknown, for the railways do not publish net receipts; but it is clear that the L.M. & S. is not fully covering dividend requirements on its 1923 preference stock, while the L. & N.E. is probably earning nothing on its 4 per cent. 2nd preference stock.

* * *

An article by Professor Clark, of Columbia University, in the *Lloyds Bank Review* of May picturesquely discusses the reparations and war debts as the normal American sees them. I quote the following:

> He is "hard-headed" about such matters, holds that the international debts were contracted in good faith, and is slow to accept the view that the resulting financial claims are a dead issue, and should be written off, consigned to the rubbish-can and forgotten.
>
> With this attitude is bound up one of the imponderables: namely, the self-respect of the American as a business man, which will suffer heavily if a serious suspicion can be aroused—and there are many who stand ready to try to arouse it—that something has been "put over on" the American voter in favour of European armament budgets, or the reputations and securities of international bankers, or any other interest which he does not identify with his own. . . .

I think Professor Clark will agree that there is only one answer which the American taxpayer will accept from Europe in this matter of war debt payments—that is, repudiation following upon a default by Germany. A failure of the Lausanne Conference may become a huge success for all debtors.

COMPANY MEETING

DUNLOP RUBBER COMPANY, LTD.

POSITION MAINTAINED DESPITE ADVERSE CONDITIONS
EFFECT OF HEAVY TAXATION
SIR ERIC GEDDES' SURVEY

The ordinary general meeting of the Dunlop Rubber Company, Ltd., was held in London on Thursday, May 12th. The Right Hon. Sir Eric Geddes, G.C.B., G.B.E. (Chairman), presided.

The chairman said (in part):—

You will have observed that the final net profit for the year shows a decrease of £61,395 as compared with 1930. In view of the fact that trade conditions all over the world have been most adverse, your Directors feel that the Company has done well in maintaining its position.

Heavy Taxation Charges

The amount of profits available for distribution has been seriously affected this year by the heavy provision that has had to be made for income-tax.

The sum of £374,943 provided in the Company's accounts, however, by no means represents the total income-tax liability *of the whole group of Dunlop Companies*. In addition, sums have been provided in the accounts of the Subsidiary Companies amounting to £173,517, making a grand total of say £548,460.

One cause of this very heavy provision is the operation of the regulations under which income-tax liability is assessed on the profits of the preceding year, and this, I am sure, calls for no explanation, as we have all doubtless had painful personal experience of the working of this regulation. It hits us in years when profits are falling, but we look for compensation when profits are rising.

The allowances granted by the Revenue for depreciation and obsolescence are totally inadequate, and in consequence prejudice the re-equipment of Industry which is necessary to compete successfully in the world markets.

Again, in the case of Companies which, like your own, are holding Companies, there is a further very serious factor in the method of assessment. In accordance with the principles of sound finance, the holding Company must provide in its Accounts for its proportion of the losses of all subsidiary and associated Companies. This necessary provision naturally reduces the amount of profits available for distribution to the Shareholders of the holding Company. Under the income-tax law, however, the provision for these losses is not allowed as a deduction in calculating the income-tax assessment on the holding Company. In times of depressed trade such as we have experienced during the past two years, international Companies such as yours have inevitably incurred heavy losses in certain of their subsidiary Companies, and in consequence have had to pay income-tax far in excess of the true profits earned by the whole organisation.

The rate of income-tax itself is, in the opinion of all Industrialists, far higher than the Industries of this Country can bear, but when to this is added the effects of the methods of assessment which I have just referred to, the result is a quite intolerable burden. How intolerable few can even imagine. For example, in our own Company in the final analysis the Ordinary Stockholders are left with a sum of £380,650 income-tax burden, and there is no margin out of which to meet this liability, which, in consequence, has to be provided out of the undistributed profits and reserves accumulated by you in past years

In addition, of course, in the case of all our Foreign Companies, foreign tax has also to be paid.

Many of you will remember that in the accounts for the year 1929, a sum, over and above actual requirements for income-tax, amounting to £225,000, was set aside. It was your Board's intention to build up that reserve still further, but owing to the World depression of the two following years this was out of the question, in fact, the £225,000 has all been absorbed or earmarked for taxation liabilities. The sponge is squeezed dry and unless reductions in expenditure are made by the Government and taxation reduced, this will inevitably be true of the Country as a whole. It simply cannot live at the present level of expenditure.

The Balance-Sheet

From a study of the Balance-Sheet you will observe that the financial position of the company is extremely strong. At 31st December last the Company's liquid assets, comprising British Government and Other Securities, together with Bank Balances and Cash, amounted to £2,821,080 and had increased during the year by £1,376,339. The surplus of Current Assets over Current Liabilities amounted to £4,359,785, representing an increase during the year of £564,800.

Every effort has been made to conserve and strengthen the liquid position of the Company, and in the difficult times through which we are passing this is naturally a source of great strength.

For reasons given in the Directors' Report, the Special Reserve against investments in and advances to Subsidiary Companies has been increased to £2,000,000. No capital losses have, in fact, been realised, and if world trading conditions improve the fortunes of our Subsidiary and Associated Companies will immediately benefit.

Losses on Exchange amounting to £156,125 have been written off to General Reserve. This sum of £156,125 is the balance of all the realised profits and losses on exchange that have been made during the year. This loss was practically entirely due to the abandonment of the Gold Standard by this country, and was a contingency which we had not foreseen. In view of the exceptional nature of this loss, the Directors decided that it should be written off against General Reserve, as the reserve was created for the specific purpose of meeting unforeseen contingencies such as this.

As this Company has a considerable proportion of its Capital invested in Companies abroad, a converse effect of the abandonment of the Gold Standard by this country was to increase the value of these investments, and, as is stated in the Directors' Report, on the basis of the rates of exchange at 31st December last, this increase in value amounts to approximately £2,500,000.

The exchanges of the world at the present time are in a chaotic condition. No credit has been taken in the accounts for this appreciation in value.

You will observe that, after providing for the Losses on Exchange of £156,125 and the transfer of £1,000,000 to Special Reserve, the General Reserve stands at £1,216,980, in addition to which the carry forward on Profit and Loss Account amounts to £391,859.

Dividend Position

Although the Profits for the year were not sufficient to cover the full dividends on the Preference Shares, the Directors have decided to recommend the payment of the dividends upon the whole of these Shares, which are cumulative as to dividends. If these dividends were not paid this year this payment would merely be deferred. In view of the strong liquid position of the Company and the ample carry forward, the Directors are of opinion that these dividends can be paid with justification.

As regards the Ordinary Stock, the Directors are of opinion that there is no alternative but to recommend that no dividend should be paid.

The Directors fully appreciate the disappointment which the Ordinary Stockholders will feel, but the adverse effect which the world trading conditions have had upon the earnings of the Company was inevitable. The Directors are confident, however, that with the return of improved conditions the earnings of this Company will respond.

The Chairman then dealt in detail with the affairs of the chief Subsidiary and Associated Companies, in England and in various parts of the world. Referring to the Export Market, the Chairman said that the Company's competitive position had been fully maintained.

New Developments

It is in the direction of broadening the basis of our manufacture and of reducing our dependence on the Tyre industry, that I look hopefully for the future. Considerable research work has also been done, and in the field of Latex manufacture we think we have made inventions of major importance.

Audit and Financial Control

The Board has concentrated considerable attention on thoroughly overhauling and improving the Company's organisation as regards financial supervision, and a complete system of budgetary control has been instituted. By this means, instead of merely looking backwards, we are constantly looking forward, and working out the position of every constituent Company and the organisation as a whole for a year ahead.

The Outlook

It is satisfactory to be able to record some small signs of improvement in our own country. Whereas the decline in production in the other chief producing countries of the World was continuous throughout 1931, there was in the United Kingdom a definite upturn in many trades in the last quarter of the year, and this has been continued in the first quarter of 1932.

Coming back to our own Company. The Directors in their report committed themselves to the belief that "in the absence of unforeseen circumstances, the current year should show an improvement over last year."

That was a forecast given in the unprecedented circumstances in the World to-day, and after mature consideration of all facts and estimates of revenue and expenses now available.

The Chairman saw a rift in the clouds of depression in the altered fiscal position of this country and (he hoped) of the British Empire. Referring to the Ottawa Conference, Sir Eric said: No other people in the World can conceivably create such a favourable situation as can those of the British Empire, and no Conference has ever been held which in my judgment equals in importance to us the great Congress which will meet at Ottawa this Summer.

Referring to the questions raised at last year's meeting regarding leakage of information and irregularities in share transactions, the Chairman had made thorough investigations, and he was completely satisfied that there were no irregularities.

The Report and Accounts were adopted.

COMPANY MEETING

ALLIANCE ASSURANCE CO.

GENERAL RESERVE NOW £1,000,000

The annual general court of the Alliance Assurance Company, Ltd., was held on Wednesday last at the head office, Bartholomew Lane, E.C.

Mr. Lionel N. de Rothschild, O.B.E., the chairman, said in the course of his speech: The year has been full of dangers and difficulties, but nevertheless, thanks to the prudent policy laid down in the past by the directors and officials of the company, a policy which your present board and your present management are striving to maintain, I think the company can congratulate itself that on the whole it has come through it in a satisfactory position.

Life Department

With regard to the Life Department, the new business has been satisfactorily maintained, while the premium income in the active "Alliance" account shows a moderate increase. A special feature has been the new prospectus relating to the "Family Protection" policy. Under this policy, in addition to the ordinary life assurance cover, for a small extra premium, a substantial income for dependents is secured during the period when it is most required. In connection with the Life Department accounts, you will notice that we have departed from our usual practice and have altered the certificate which is usually given with regard to the value of the securities. It was thought unnecessary to deal otherwise with this at the present moment, and should any writing down be required, this will be dealt with when the respective quinquennial valuations are made. It is not necessary to refer to the closed funds, but with regard to the active "Alliance" fund, the depreciation was approximately £800,000 at the end of the year.

Except for foreign Government securities, there has been a recovery in the markets, and I am glad to say that a substantial portion of the depreciation has now been recovered. Trading profits for the three years have been normal and provided the depreciation does not become larger than it is now there is every prospect of a satisfactory bonus being declared at the end of 1933.

Fire Department

In the Fire Department, I am able to report the usual satisfactory trading results. The losses were appreciably less than in 1930. Conditions, however are difficult, and in order to maintain the company's position, special efforts have to be made which necessarily involve additional expense.

Accident Department

With reference to the Accident Department, the principal feature of the year, as foreshadowed by the chairman at the last annual meeting, has been the working of the Road Traffic Act. The profit earned on motor business is not large and the business is difficult. The claims for personal injuries tend to show an increase. It is quite possible that soft-hearted juries may be inclined to award damages more freely, knowing as they do now that it is not the individual who has injured the third party but the rich insurance company behind him that pays. Of burglaries there has again been some increase, and in this case the motor car is also to blame in providing an easy means of escape for the burglar after his deed is accomplished. It is to be hoped that the strenuous efforts which the authorities are making to prevent this may soon bear fruit.

Marine Department

The Marine account, perhaps, more clearly reflects the course of trade than any other. The income for 1931 was about £53,000 less than in 1930, which itself was £55,000 less than in 1929. The Marine fund is exceptionally strong, being nearly 2½ times the present income.

After making full provision for dividend requirements and after carrying forward approximately the same amount as last year, we are enabled to put £100,000 to general reserve, bringing this up to £1,000,000, and we have made a larger appropriation than usual towards writing down our premises in view of the rebuilding of the head office.

It is satisfactory on members' account to note that Stock Exchange securities at the end of the year stood well below their market values, and these also show a further considerable appreciation since the closing of the accounts.

One change has been made which we feel sure will meet with general approval. It will be noted that instead of transferring the whole of the members' share of the quinquennial profits of the Imperial Life Fund, only one-fifth has been brought into account for the current year. This will tend to equalise the transfers in each year and enable a truer prospect to be gained of the real trading position of the company.

Before concluding his speech, the chairman paid a tribute to the very able management of the company and its subsidiaries, which had enabled a very difficult year to be successfully surmounted.

The report was unanimously adopted.

COMPANY MEETING

THE LONDON ASSURANCE

TOTAL ASSETS EXCEED £14,000,000

The annual general court of the London Assurance was held on Wednesday last at No. 1, King William Street, London, E.C.

Mr. Colin Frederick Campbell (the governor) said that, having regard to the difficult conditions which had existed during the past year and the fact that the operations of the corporation extended throughout both hemispheres, shareholders would not have looked for a report of unbroken prosperity in every department of the business although he claimed that the picture as a whole was one with which in the circumstances they might be satisfied. Having in 1930 acquired the Guildhall Insurance Company, they followed this expansion last year by the acquisition of the Federal Mutual Insurance Company of Australia, which had large connections throughout that country and a valuable business.

Dealing with the accounts submitted he said that the progress made during the year in the Life Department was quite satisfactory, the fund having increased by £275,464 to £6,676,756. The new life business completed amounted to 2,299 policies assuring £1,795,780 net, as compared with 2,609 policies for £2,055,975 net in 1930. The total premium income was higher by £17,475 and the consideration for annuities granted by £3,788. The claims by death, although higher than in 1930, were in fact more satisfactory as they occurred among the older lives. The actual claims in respect of lives under 63 years of age were only 35 per cent. of the expected, which compared with 51 per cent. in 1930.

Fire and Marine Results

The results of their Fire account had been disappointing, for it was on these that they had grown accustomed to rely for a steady annual profit. While conditions in America continued as they were at present, it was a matter of great difficulty for the management to produce good results in that field. The business transacted in their home department and through their Dominion branches and foreign agencies had run off well, and they had been able to protect their business in spite of the great depression in world conditions. After transferring £89,302 to profit and loss the fire fund amounted to £1,695,000, being slightly over 85 per cent. of the premium income. With regard to their fire business as a whole, he was convinced that as soon as any general revival in trade conditions took place the effect would be seen in this department.

The Marine account had turned out to be a good one, and, after transferring £159,322 to the credit of profit and loss account, the fund stood at £901,567, which was 102½ per cent. of the premium income. This result was due to some extent to a diminution in the number of total losses, and also to an increase in the hull rates of premium. Conditions in the marine insurance market, however, continued to be very difficult and far from satisfactory, and the hull account, in particular, required most careful handling.

Accident Department

The results of the Accident Department had been unsatisfactory for some time past, largely on account of adverse conditions in the United States. They had transferred £135,416 from profit and loss account to the credit of this account, and the fund had been increased to £600,000 by adding £90,000 to the additional reserve. The business in the Home department ran off satisfactorily, and the motor insurance results were rather better than they had expected.

It would be foolish to pretend that their various underwriting accounts were altogether satisfactory. There was a small profit in the aggregate, but not such as they expected or considered adequate. The truth remained, however, that, even at a time of world-wide depression, they were maintaining their large resources intact and were giving their shareholders a dividend of 45 per cent., which, he suggested, was no mean return. While the amount brought into the profit and loss account at the beginning of the year was £317,670, the amount carried forward to 1932 was £357,847, an increase of £40,177. The total assets now exceeded 14 millions sterling. The Stock Exchange investments, taken in the aggregate, stood in the books at December 31 last at prices which were below the market quotations then ruling, so that no provision for depreciation had been necessary. All their associated companies had made satisfactory progress.

A Shareholder's Suggestion

Mr. E. T. Hargraves suggested that it would be of advantage to all concerned if the Government could be induced to agree that life policies, up to £1,000 at any rate, in respect of which no claim for rebate of income tax on the premiums had been made, should be paid free of death duties on maturity.

The Chairman, replying, said that if anything could be arranged with the Treasury in that connection, it would be a very great relief to those seeking to make provision for the future.

The report was unanimously adopted.

COMPANY MEETING

SPILLERS LIMITED

SIR MALCOLM ROBERTSON'S SPEECH

The Rt. Hon. Sir Malcolm A. Robertson, Chairman of Spillers, Limited, presiding at the annual general meeting of the Company on Saturday, said that the profits for the year amounted to £549,184. Payments thereout, including £125,000 to the staff and workmen's benefit fund, left £352,077 to be carried to the balance sheet.

The directors proposed paying a dividend of 12½ per cent. (making 15 per cent. for the year) on the ordinary shares and 10 per cent. on the deferred ordinary shares. Factors making for substantial profits, both on the flour milling side of the business and in the manufacture of animal foods, were the rationalisation of the milling industry in conjunction with the reorganisation of the Company and a board of whole-time directors.

THE WHEAT QUOTA

The effect of the recently imposed Wheat Quota Act was difficult to foretell, but it was clear that the difficulties of an already complicated business would be increased, while the belief in some quarters that the Act would result in great financial gains to millers was entirely unwarranted. The millers' attitude had been misunderstood. A straightforward duty would have been infinitely more desirable. The Ottawa Conference, too, was a cause for anxiety. If it was made compulsory to use high quotas of Dominion wheats with no compensating advantage by the strict limitation of the import of foreign and Dominion flour, the interests of the milling industry would be gravely affected.

It was anticipated that the new mills the Company was erecting on deep water at Cardiff and Bristol, which would be replete with every modern convenience, would be working within two years.

Owing to the increased clerical labour occasioned by an active market in the Company's shares, each one of which had to bear a distinctive number, it was proposed to convert the issued shares (except the co-partnership shares) into stock, where it was not necessary to designate each unit with a distinctive number.

THE BRITISH OAK INSURANCE COMPANY

The British Oak Insurance Company had experienced a great improvement, a loss of £39,877 having been converted into a profit of £24,751. The debit balance had thus been reduced from £78,395 to £53,644.

He, as chairman, had visited every one of the Company's chief centres during the year, and had personally interviewed every senior member of the administrative staff. In connection with the staff, shareholders would be gratified to learn that the bonus payable under the staff co-partnership scheme for the past year was equal to the highest yet paid. In addition, the dividend on the shares already issued was to be 13½ per cent.

Although the group pension scheme for all milling operatives had been established, its full extent could not be felt for many years. The directors, therefore, had made provision in the accounts for the establishment of a fund to secure adequate provision for the Company's workpeople in their retirement.

The report and accounts were adopted, and consideration of the question of the directors' remuneration was, on the motion of the chairman, postponed.

COMPANY MEETING

BRITISH MATCH CORPORATION

SATISFACTORY RESULTS
NO KREUGER HOLDINGS

The fifth ordinary general meeting of the British Match Corporation, Ltd., was held on Wednesday last at Beaver House, London, E.C.

Sir George Paton (chairman and managing director) said that he must say a few words in regard to the tragic death of Mr. Ivar Kreuger, which had taken place in Paris on March 12 last. In 1927, when the Corporation was formed, they had acquired the interests of the Swedish Match Co. and its associated companies throughout the British Empire, other than in Asia, and the Swedish Match Co. had received 30 per cent. of the shares in the British Match Corporation for their rights, namely 1,800,000 shares. Those shares had been deposited with the Skandinaviska Bank in Stockholm, and the directors had been able to secure an agreement with that Bank and the Swedish Match Co. which provided that the shares would continue to be subject to the restrictions made under the original agreement.

Neither the British Match Corporation, nor any of its subsidiaries, had any holding of shares in the Swedish Match Company or any of the Kreuger groups of companies, and they had made no loans to those companies, nor had they entered into any financial guarantees in regard to them. Shareholders would realise, however, that a catastrophe of that magnitude must have repercussions throughout the whole industry, and likely for years to come. The directors were profoundly thankful that they had been so fortunate that the company had not been involved in that terrible financial debacle.

Under all those conditions, and remembering the industrial depression, not only at home, but throughout the whole world, it was very gratifying to the board to be able to present accounts showing a profit only slightly less than that of last year, and which would, he trusted, be regarded by the shareholders as satisfactory.

That result had been secured notwithstanding the adverse effect of exchanges, increased income-tax, and the new import duties on certain raw materials which they were obliged to import, notably timber. Matches, being already subject to Excise and Customs Duties imposed during the War for Revenue purposes which had no protective effect, did not come within the scope of the Import Duties Act. As a result of that, foreign manufacturers escaped additional import duties on their matches, which were made from the same raw materials on which the British manufacturer must now pay.

Dealing with the accounts, the chairman said that shares in subsidiary companies yielded a gross return of just under 10 per cent. The net result was a balance of profit of £442,597, against £461,387. They proposed to write £40,000 off goodwill, rights, etc., to make a beginning with a reserve fund by transferring £50,000 to it, and to pay a final dividend of 4 per cent. free of income-tax on the ordinary shares. He was sure shareholders would agree that the position of the Corporation and its subsidiaries was financially strong and liquid, and, when trade improved, not only in this country but throughout the world, they had every opportunity to get their full share. Until such time they must practise rigid economy and endeavour to maintain the sound position which they had attained.

Before moving the resolutions necessary to carry out the recommendations of the Directors, the chairman said it was his privilege and pleasure to express the gratitude of the board not only to the staff of this corporation, but also to the directors, officials, staff, and workers of all the various businesses at home and abroad connected with this great organisation. They were served by very loyal and devoted employees.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

COMPANY MEETING

ODHAMS PRESS, LIMITED

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

The Twelfth Annual General Meeting of the company was held on Monday last at the Connaught Rooms, London. Mr. W. J. B. Odhams, the Chairman, in the course of his speech, said:—

Last year we were able to report an increase in the net profit from £203,653 to £261,268. In bringing the record up from £261,268 to £276,272, I think you will agree that it is not an unsatisfactory achievement in a year which has been a severe testing time for all commercial concerns, from the smallest to the largest.

Turning to the accounts, the first important item to engage your attention will be the addition of the £300,000 to Debenture Stock made during the year. The new money was for general purposes and expansion of the Company's business, and for the development programme of the "Daily Herald," on lines previously successfully adopted in the case of "John Bull" and "The People."

Ten years ago the weekly net sales of "John Bull" had fallen to under 300,000, and the paper had ceased to be a paying proposition. We were faced with the choice of allowing it to die or of going forward and by a liberal expenditure restoring it to its original value. We have full justification to-day for the expenditure, because "John Bull," with its circulation of over a million and a half, is now one of the most profitable of our assets.

And so with "The People." This publication did not reach a profit-earning basis until the third year. After that the corner was turned and a small profit was made after providing for all interest on capital expenditure. Since then the publication has made still further progress, and last year the net profit, after meeting the year's development expenditure previously charged to capital account, and all other charges, amounted to £84,416.

And now I come to the position of the "Daily Herald." Here history has so far exactly repeated itself and there is every indication that the same satisfactory result will be reached as has been the case with "John Bull" and "The People." The paper is now entering upon its third year of working under our management. As the accounts show, large amounts have been and are still being expended in development. The justification for these is amply shown by the circulation figures, the daily net sales being well over one and a half million copies. Recently the space allocated to advertisements has been insufficient to meet the demands of advertisers.

Having dealt with the periodical and printing sides of the business, the Chairman paid a tribute to Mr. J. S. Elias, the managing director. The report and accounts were adopted.

COMPANY MEETING

MARKS & SPENCER, LIMITED

REMARKABLE PROGRESS

95% BRITISH GOODS

IMPROVEMENT IN VALUE TO CONSUMER

The Sixth Ordinary General Meeting of Marks and Spencer, Limited, was held on Tuesday last.

Mr. Simon Marks (Chairman and Managing Director) in the course of his speech dealt with the following points:

The profit for the past year amounted to £670,117, an increase of £194,044 on that of the previous year.

BEST POSSIBLE VALUES FOR THE PUBLIC

The increase in profit was due to the increased volume of trading. The Company's policy was to expand sales by supplying the public with the best possible values and giving consumers the advantage of reductions in cost the large buying capacity enabled it to secure.

BRITISH GOODS

To-day the proportion of goods sold by the Company manufactured in this country exceeded the very high figure of 95 per cent.

ALLOCATION OF PROFITS

There was now an available balance of £440,955 to be appropriated as follows: Properties Contingency Reserve, £17,500; General Reserve Account, £170,403; Payment of a final dividend on the Ordinary and "A" Ordinary shares, making 35 per cent. for the year ended March 31, 1932, carrying forward to next year's accounts £53,402.

ISSUE ON BONUS TERMS

A distribution by way of bonus to the holders of the existing ordinary and "A" ordinary shares of the company in the proportion of one in ten was recommended.

RESERVES

After providing for allocation in respect of bonus, the general reserve account would amount to £420,000.

EXPENDITURE ON PROPERTIES

The assets shown in the balance-sheet were dealt with in detail. Freehold, leasehold, and leased properties stood at £3,501,833, furniture and fixtures at £411,877. The total amount charged against the profits for depreciation, repairs and renewals was £121,868.

STOCK-IN-TRADE

The stock-in-trade at £516,624 showed an increase of £98,841 on the previous year.

The cash at bank and in hand amounted to £104,364, a reduction of £446,469, accounted for by our acquisition and development of new properties and additional stock required for our new stores.

CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Thirty-three super stores were opened in the past year.

The building programme for this year already embraced thirty stores, on completion of which the company would be operating 165 stores. A large number of other sites were under consideration, which should give this year a development on a much larger scale than in previous years.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The development programme demanded large resources. Ample financial arrangements had been made to cover the programme in mind for at least three years, which enabled the company to call for moneys as and when required, obviating the necessity of keeping large balances lying idle at the bank.

MERCHANDISING POLICY

The company's profit was not made by big margins, but through large and rapid turnover of merchandise which the public needed. It was constantly borne in mind that the reduction of cost and the improvement of value to the consumer were the best means of stimulating sales and ultimately of reducing costs again.

The company's selling prices, ranging from 3d. to 5s., enabled the company to offer its customers a very large range and variety of useful and attractive merchandise in all departments.

The company insisted upon perfect and well-finished goods, and did not offer the public either "jobs" or "sub-standard" articles.

THANKS TO OFFICERS AND STAFF

The chairman expressed gratitude and thanks, on behalf of the board, to the officials, administrative, and all other ranks of the staff.

INCREASED DIVIDEND

The chairman concluded by moving the adoption of the report and accounts and the payment of the final dividend, as recommended.

The resolution was seconded by Mr I. M. Sieff (B.Com) (vice-chairman and assistant managing director), put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

A vote of thanks to the chairman and board of directors and staff, proposed by Mr. Albert I. Belisha and seconded by Mr. Nathan Laski, was carried with acclamation.

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May 14, 1932

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

Russian Supplement

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RUSSIA TO-DAY

THE day has gone when it was possible to treat Soviet Russia as a bad joke, or a plague spot to be cleaned up by a Holy War, or even as a riddle which sane men would not waste their time in guessing at. Soviet Russia is a going concern. Its achievements are formidable; its purpose and its methods are a challenge to the capitalist world—and, in a different sense, to the Socialist world. We have got to think about Russia, and to do something about Russia, whether we like it or not. This Supplement does not present a complete picture or touch on every aspect of the problem; for that an encyclopædia would be required. The articles it contains deal with certain questions, economic, political or cultural, which exercise men's minds to-day. The writers state facts that the doubter may check for himself; they express opinions which are, of course, their own, but which are important in that they are based on first-hand knowledge or close study. By way of introduction, we shall attempt a summary answer to two questions: What are the Russians aiming at, and what progress have they made towards their goal?

The first question can be disposed of very shortly. The prime aim is the building of a new society—a Socialist society. Ultimately, no doubt, it is hoped that it will be world wide; but for the moment the energies of the builders are concentrated on their own territory, the 8,000,000 square miles and the 160,000,000 people of the U.S.S.R. The Five Year Plan, important and all-absorbing as it is, is not an end, but a means. It is essential to remember that, in passing judgment; or else one may go astray in making comparisons, or in estimating strong and weak points, mistakes or successes. It is imperative also to remember the circumstances in which the Plan is being carried out. The new Russia is not at peace. The war mentality persists. Fear of foreign intervention is ever present; it may be exaggerated, but it is not baseless. The fear of counter-revolution at home is also strong, and these fears, enhanced by Marxist doctrine and by fervour for Socialism, account for much of the ruthlessness with which the dictatorship of the proletariat is conducted. And it results partly from all this, and partly from the pressure and speed of the new economic developments, that the Russian people to-day are living and working under "war conditions," conditions of strain, hardship and shortage, comparable to those that other countries were familiar with in the Great War.

Let us now look at the measure of progress that has been made. It is easy to criticise the Plan at this point or that, and it is legitimate to discount some of the boasts and prophecies that we hear about it. But nobody can pretend that it has not achieved startling triumphs, and those who have studied it dispassionately will expect it, and its successor, to achieve still more. Out of the debris left by war, revolution, pestilence and famine, there have emerged new industries and enterprises, old industries reconstructed and expanded, an agricultural system which has turned mediæval peasants into modern mechanics and threatened the corn producers of the capitalist world (or so they think) with ruin. The advance has not been equal all along the line. It has been most in evidence in the heavy industries—and that of set purpose; it is deemed necessary to lay the foundations wide and deep. Iron and steel production has been pushed on at a furious pace in the Urals. What was a remote Cossack village in 1929 is now a town of 70,000 workers, a huge industrial plant with blast furnaces whose capacity, when they are all completed, will, it is said, surpass that of any in Europe. The oil wells of Baku have been exploited to the full. Great efforts have been made to expand and modernise the coal mines. The giant hydro-electric power station at Dnieprostroy is on the point of completion. Stalingrad is turning out its 150 tractors a day. At Autostroy, which is designed to make 140,000 Ford cars and lorries a year, there has been a hitch, chiefly, it appears, through bad organisation of supplies. But this is being rectified, and the works will get into their swing before long. The development of a number of other industries, though it has not been neglected, has not been so fast—not fast enough, indeed, to satisfy the needs of a growing population with a rising standard of demand. But a big expansion is promised in the next few years. Transport is notoriously weak—the weakest point in the whole system. Inadequate railways, overworked and worn-out rolling-stock, and a desperate shortage of motor vehicles, have proved a constant handicap. The second Five Year Plan makes elaborate provision for renovating and extending the whole system.

These are only a few illustrations; it would be impossible to catalogue all the items in the scheme of industrialisation from the Arctic to the Caspian, from Minsk to Vladivostok. As for agriculture, which is itself being industrialised, it must suffice to recall the main facts. Over 60 per cent. of the peasant households are working on the collective farms, and that percentage can almost certainly be increased without much difficulty. The change has involved cruel hardship on the *kulaks*, the well-to-do peasants, who have been suppressed or evicted; and doubtless it has not enchanted all the "middle peasants." But there can be no question of its value from an economic point of view. Co-operation and mechanisation on the Collectives, and on the State farms, mean a far greater and a cheaper production than was attainable under the old system. And, from the human point of view, it should make for the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

But every ointment has its fly. The Five Year Plan has had, and still has, to contend with serious difficulties. One of these is financial. Russia needs credits—which this country and others, as Sir George Paish argues on another page, ought to supply her with. Apart from that, there are internal weaknesses. Progress in production is not to be measured in quantity alone, but in the quality of the goods, and there has been much poor stuff turned out. That has

been due partly to hustle, partly to lack of experience and skill in the workers and in the management. But the Soviet Government, the Communist Party and the directors of industry are not merely aware of this weakness; they are doing all in their power to remedy it, and it would be a mistake to imagine that shoddiness is always going to be the mark of Russian work.

Soviet planning is, of course, not confined to pig-iron and corn and coal and cotton. Evidently, if the aim is the creation of a Socialist State, a society of equals, there must be immense social and cultural developments. And, in fact, there have been such developments. Class distinctions have been abolished, or very nearly so. Women have been put on an equality with men. Education and public health have made rapid strides. Schools, primary and secondary, technical colleges, university courses, classes for the youths in the Red Army, Trade Union and factory classes for young and old, have multiplied. Curricula have been reorganised, modernised, atheised, Marxised. There has been a steady drive against illiteracy, and though there are still some millions of men and women in the U.S.S.R. who cannot read and write, they are rapidily diminishing, and within a year or two it is intended that there shall be none. In all this there is much to admire, and some features that give rise to doubts or fears. The new education is, in any case, an exceedingly powerful force in the shaping of the new society, and, indeed, the vigour and enthusiasm of the boys and girls, under Communist inspiration and organisation, are already making their mark, and will presently make it deeper. In the sphere of public health, Russia has not yet caught up the West, but she has gone a long way. In the capital and the big towns and in some of the villages an efficient medical service is established; hospitals and clinics are increasing; problems of sanitation are being strenuously attacked; everywhere personal hygiene (which was never a strong point in the Russian proletariat) is being preached and pushed. And in their zeal for child welfare in all its forms the rulers of Russia are second to none.

Finally, what of the people of Russia, the workers in whose name and for whose benefit all these plans are being forced through? At present they are paying the price, and a pretty high price, though they may judge the goods are worth it. Life, for all in the towns and most in the country, is hard. There is overcrowding; food is rationed; there is a shortage of many of the necessaries and semi-luxuries. There is also a lack of political freedom, which shocks Englishmen, but which may be a good deal less shocking to Russians who have never had any acquaintance with democracy, and who do enjoy forms of social and industrial freedom that are uncommon in capitalist lands. On the other hand, the Russian workman has some substantial gains that he can appreciate. Wages have risen, not merely money wages, but real wages. Hours of work have been reduced, conditions of work have improved. There is no terror of unemployment. A generous system of social insurance, to which the worker pays no contribution, provides medical treatment, pensions for disablement and old age, maternity benefits. Everyone has an annual holiday with full pay, and those who are lucky may enjoy it free of charge in a rest-house in the country or by the sea. And to crown these material advantages, the Russian worker has a new-found dignity and pride. Pride, indeed, is not a perfect substitute for a full belly and a home of your own; but of those things, too, there is hope. The Russian workers do not, we believe, consider themselves objects for pity—especially when they survey the plight of those in other lands. The real sufferers are the "liquidated" bourgeoisie, the dispossessed classes who still hunger after what they have lost, the intellectuals who cannot adapt themselves to a changed environment. For them Soviet Russia offers small hope. Communism demands a classless State, and it sets strict bounds to the liberty of the individual to oppose the mass.

THE RUSSIAN CREDIT PROBLEM

THE financial difficulties in which the world now finds itself should make for a better and a more sympathetic understanding of the Russian financial problem. In no small measure the severe depression into which the world is plunged is due to the credit situation. After enjoying unlimited credit until 1929, the people of all countries in the last two and a half years have found it very difficult to obtain, and instead of credit expansion there has been severe credit contraction with almost catastrophic consequences.

But Russia has been compelled to do without either investment or banking credit ever since the summer of 1917, notwithstanding her urgent need of credit to repair the disorganisation of and damage to her industries caused by the war. For lack of credit, and consequently of trade, the lives of all the townspeople of Russia were in jeopardy inasmuch as they had almost no means of paying for the food they needed or for the raw materials they required for their industries. To remedy this situation in the absence of credit the whole of the Russian people had to submit to great sacrifices, in order, in the first place, to support the town populations, in the second to re-create and expand, with the greatest possible speed, the industries which would enable the townspeople to produce manufactured goods in sufficient quantity to pay for the food and raw material they needed for their sustenance, and, in the third place, to bring about the necessary expansion in the production of food and raw materials of all kinds required to support so great a population as Russia possesses, and to pay for foreign machinery and other foreign products which had to be purchased abroad.

Whatever may be thought of the kind of regime which Russia possesses, no one can deny that the Soviet Government since 1917 has had to overcome difficulties greater than have confronted any Government of modern times in periods of peace, and that it has faced its difficulties with courage, determination, and ability.

In the 'eighties of last century Russia's finances were thrown into disorder by the closing of the German money market to her long-term loan requirements, but short-term credits continued to be supplied to her by the British money market, and the Russian Government of those days was never confronted with such overwhelming difficulties as those which have confronted the rulers of Russia since the summer of 1917.

For fifteen years no money market in the world has been willing to supply Russia with those long-term loans and short-term credits which France, Great Britain, and in some measure Germany, supplied to her in pre-war days.

But Russia's credit problem has now become part of the world's credit problem. Not only is Russia unable to obtain investment and banking credit, but very few nations can obtain it either. In consequence of this, the world is faced with the same danger of breakdown as occurred in Russia in 1917 when her credit facilities came to an end.

It is true that Russia's inability to obtain credit arose from political causes, and that the inability of other nations to obtain credit arises in the main from economic causes. But the consequences are likely to be the same unless the right remedies are applied. At present these remedies are not being applied, and it is of very great moment that the whole situation should be surveyed with the utmost care in order that the true remedies shall be discovered and applied.

Certainly one of the problems that needs to be adjusted is the Russian problem. And, moreover, it is one that might be adjusted without further delay. The grant of

credit to Russia after all these years of abstention is not only desirable from Russia's standpoint; it is equally desirable from the world's standpoint. Indeed, if the matter were divorced from political considerations and treated entirely from the economic standpoint, these advantages would be at once obvious even to the sceptical.

The economic position of Russia compares very favourably with the economic position of most of the other countries of the world. The potential resources of Russia are almost unlimited, and as they are developed will enable the Russian Government to meet any obligations it is likely to incur. On the other hand, many countries which have obtained such vast sums of both investment and short-term credit have, for the present at any rate, borrowed all they are entitled to borrow, having regard either to their present or to their potential income.

Were Russia to honour her pre-war obligations up to the limit of her present capacity, her position would still be a very strong one. No one can examine the economic security of those obligations in the years before the war without realising the exceedingly strong financial position of the then Russian Government. Its revenue from income-earning assets alone, such as railways, mines, etc., was more than enough to meet the whole of the interest upon its pre-war obligations, so that the debt imposed no taxation upon the Russian people. If these pre-war obligations were now written down to figures that would still meet the reasonable demands of her creditors, and if, at the same time, she were supplied with new credit for the improvement and extension of her transport system and for the completion of her Five Year Plan, her financial position would still compare very favourably with that of other countries.

Nor does her Five Year Plan render her position less strong. On the contrary, the work done under the Plan is strengthening her financial position, inasmuch as she is finding out of income the greater portion of the capital she is spending, and the sums she still owes to foreign manufacturers for machinery are quite small in comparison with the capital value of the new works and machinery she has built and is still building under the Plan.

The Five Year Plan is thus adding to the economic security which Russia can now offer to the investor in comparison with the security she could offer pre-war.

No consideration of the problem can leave out of account the importance of Russia to Europe and the world in general at the present time. The nations are suffering from lack of selling power at a moment when they have unprecedented obligations to meet and are in danger of bankruptcy unless the markets for their products can be restored and expanded. Therefore, if a nation can be found that merits credit with which it can purchase goods from other countries more freely, and at the same time can consume a larger quantity of its own products, thus relieving world markets of some of the redundant surplus, it is essential that such a nation should be discovered. Any such increase of demand for the world's products at the present time would materially help to overcome a highly dangerous situation. The Russian problem certainly demands consideration in view of the great contribution its solution would make to world recovery.

Fortunately, the political obstacles to the recovery of Russia and to the grant of foreign credit are being steadily reduced by the wisdom of the present Russian Government as well as of the other Governments of Europe whose relations with Russia are becoming more cordial. Thus the time would seem to be propitious for the settlement of the Russian problem in all its phases in so far as it affects other nations, and for agreements to be reached in regard both to pre-war debts and to new long-term and short-term credits.

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SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF THE SECOND FIVE YEAR PLAN

THE workers of the U.S.S.R. are now faced with the problem of quickly elaborating a second Five Year Plan and having to do it in as perfect a manner as possible. It is common knowledge that the fabric of a man's body is renewed every five years down to the least of the cells of his bones. The fabric of the social body, it would seem, to judge by the experience of the first Five Year Plan, takes an equal period of time for renewal. This has been proved by the great progress made in social and economic construction in the U.S.S.R. during the first Five Year Plan, and the progress projected in the second Five Year Plan. Beyond our borders, the vast scale of the works in the first Five Year Plan seemed impossible of fulfilment. Yet experience has shown the sceptics to be mistaken. In the present paper there is no need to repeat the estimates of the first Five Year Plan, which has been justly described as *the plan of great works*. The second Five-Year Plan, however, could be so described with even greater justice. The estimated capital expenditure in the second Five Year Plan reaches the sum of 150 milliard roubles, being two and a half times the amount provided in the first Five Year Plan. The supply of electricity in the U.S.S.R. is to reach 100 milliard kwt.-hours by 1937, as against 17 milliard kwt.-hours in 1932. And with the six-fold growth in electrification, the manufacture of machinery is to be increased by three to three and a half times. The output of oil and coal is to be increased by two and a half to three times the present production. The output of iron is to reach 22 million tons, that is to say, by 1937, the last year of the plan, the output will have been increased by 12 million tons. The realisation of only one of these projects would be a world record in an historical sense. The railway system is to be extended by 30,000 kilometres of new lines, while an equal length of existing lines is to be changed over from steam to electricity. The estimated output of automobiles is on the scale of 300,000 to 400,000 of them a year, and 170,000 new tractors are annually to be put into agriculture.

These figures demonstrate the truly revolutionary progress projected in the second Five Year Plan in the entire technical and economic structure of the U.S.S.R. The carrying out of these projects will mean the completion of the great scheme for the building of the national economy of the U.S.S.R. on Socialist foundations.

How far are these big undertakings possible of achievement? In this paper it is impossible to answer the question in detail. I shall only stress the fact that the foregoing figures represent the deductions from an all-round consideration of the movement of the national economy in the first five years. One thing is certain: the second Five Year Plan for the development of the national economy can only be translated into reality by the *inspired efforts of the millions of conscious workers and by a scientifically worked out economy of the living and material productive resources.* That is why new progress must be made in the entire field of scientific investigation of our resources, and new forms of co-operation must be achieved between scientific and theoretic workers and those engaged in the practical and executive work. It was not in vain that the report on the thesis of the second Five Year Plan contained the words: "In order to accomplish the great task of the technical reconstruction of the national economy, the Academy of Science in Leningrad, the Communist Academy in Moscow, the scientific research institutes, higher technical schools, publishing concerns and technical journals are expected to devote themselves to the common aim, described in the watchword: *Science and technology in the service of the second Five Year Plan.*"

The call has not come to us unawares. Even the first plan for the national economy—the general plan which covered the first peaceful decade after the October revolution (the decade including approximately the first three years of the Five Year Plan)—was based on a utilisation of the scientific discoveries made in every field of economic activity. This plan, known as the General Plan for the Electrification of the Country, at the direction of the Central Executive Committee, was elaborated on a *profoundly scientific basis.* Its successful achievement, coinciding with that of the first Five Year Plan, demonstrates its scientific soundness. On the invincible principle of scientific Socialism, that of a collective economy, *grew a scientific knowledge* intimately concerned with the actual translation of the principle into life. Economic construction in itself compelled our dependence on science. The industrialisation of the country on the most up-to-date foreign lines could not be accomplished without the increasing application of Western European technique. Hence the reconstruction of the Soviet national economy in the first five years proceeded under the sign of an extensive development of scientific research along the line of improving on the technique of Western Europe and still more on the line of independent research. In 1931 alone the number of scientific research institutes was doubled. The country now possesses a comprehensive system of scientific institutes, and the watchword is to place them "nearer and nearer to the centres of production." At the commencement of 1932 the scientific research institutes of an all-Union authority numbered 100, and they had 76 branches; the Republics possessed 122 scientific research institutes, having 83 branches. Among them were five institutes of an all-Union authority devoted to power, eight to fuel, eleven to metal, twelve to construction of machinery, nineteen to chemicals. During the period

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1928–31 the increase in the number of scientific research bodies was the following:

	1928.	1929.	1930.	1931.
No. of industrial scientific research institutes ..	80	65	141	205

The total increase in the strength of the scientific research personnel (in industries only) was the following:

Year.	Directing Personnel.	Scientific Workers.	Technical Workers.	Aspirants.
1929	362	1,437	1,348	62
1930	1,033	4,943	5,203	248
1931	2,003	8,757	12,099	1,069

Mention must also be made of the fact that an equally intensive development in scientific research is going on in education and agriculture and in the transport system, which all have their own scientific research bodies.

It was not by mere accident that the representatives of the Academy of Science took part in the discussions on the problems of the second Five Year Plan at the conference of Bolsheviks held in February. The speeches of these representatives showed that the year 1931 was one of *decisive change for Soviet science*. In that year the Academy of Science arranged two sessions, one to take place in Moscow and the other in Leningrad. The first session was devoted to the discussion of the subject: "What can science do to realise the watchword—'Catch up capitalist countries and go beyond them.'" The subject of discussion at the second session in Leningrad was: "Productive resources and the prospects for the development of the productive forces in the Leningrad area." The Academy of Science undertook to organise sections in the Urals, in Western Siberia, the Far East, in the Caucasus and in Central Asia. At the session of the Academy held this March, which has only just been concluded, nineteen new chairs in the technical sciences were instituted and the Academy elected among its new members the important engineers of our big works like Dnieprostroy, Volkhov, Kuznetskstroy, etc., also important theoreticians in *metallurgy, electrical technology, chemistry and physics*. The whole of the Academy's work this year is planned with a view to aiding the principal projects of the second Five Year Plan of Socialist construction. One of the Academy's main difficulties is the co-ordination of its own work and that of its seventy-five branches with the work of the rest of the scientific research bodies throughout the country. The Academy of Science is evidently assuming the role of director of the staff of scientific workers in the country. The advantage of this will be the greater ease with which the workers most qualified for any particular branch of work can be set to solve the complexity of a problem under scientific conditions in which they are best able to estimate all the factors relating to it. The duties assumed by the Academy of Science are the working out of the main theoretic problems and the collection and preparation of initial material. It is also suggested that the Academy shall develop its expeditionary activities more and concentrate all the work of its constituent bodies on the investigation of the country's productive resources, a work which, in magnitude and pace, must be in keeping with the needs of the Five Year Plan. Finally, the joining up of the forces of the academic bodies with the practical work of economic construction is bound to lead to the formation of a number of *commissions of experts* whose duties will be of a two-fold nature, being concerned not only with theoretic research, but with the actual work of economic construction. Signs are visible of a perfectly new combination of workers—from the *higher technical educational institutions*, which prepare the personnel, the *scientific research institutes*, which carry on research in different branches of technical science, and the *managers of factories*, who accept the results of the work of the former in an exemplary way. It may be said without exaggeration that the country has never been so drawn to scientific knowledge as at the

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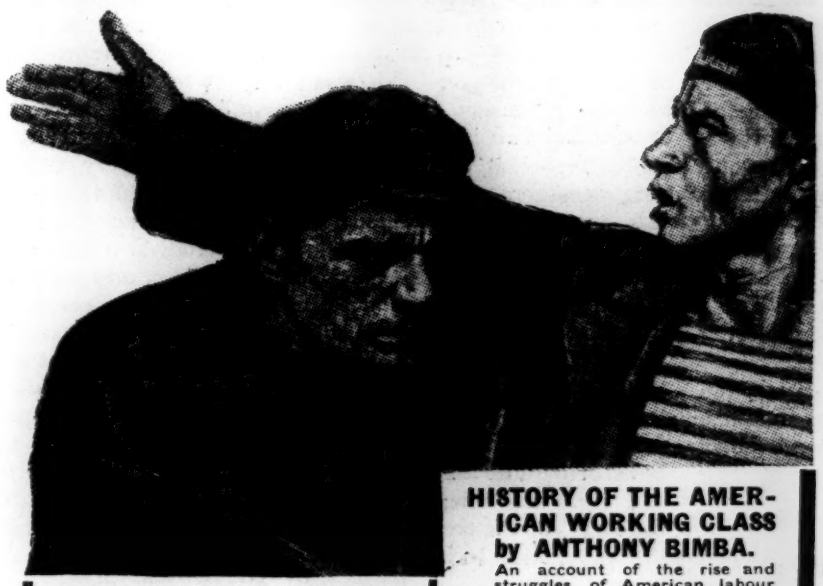

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present time. As compared with pre-war Russia, the number of young people who pass through the higher schools has increased ten-fold. Moreover, technical instruction is available to the mass of workers employed in our big works and factories. The workers' faculties are more and more deliberately becoming the connecting link in an ordered system of educational institutions, by which every worker of ability will be able to rise to the topmost heights of learning. In addition, the organisation of production on the most up-to-date electrical technique is gradually replacing primitive forms of manual labour by machine labour and giving rise to a *new type of industrial worker*, who consciously controls the most complex processes of production. A technical reconstruction along these lines will more and more open up the ways by which the workers of our country can abolish the differences in conditions of work in the industry of the towns and in agriculture, so as, once and for all, to close the breach not only between town and village, but between manual and intellectual work. Finally, the second Five Year Plan is a plan of great progress in the productive effectiveness of the Soviet workers. It can be realised by the setting up of new records not only in the quantitative increase of production, but in the *qualitative improvement of socialised labour*. It pre-supposes a new face, a new profile of the country's worker; it demands a new combination of the heroic inspiration of the toiling masses and the united forces of science. And under this sign we shall go ahead to the successful completion of the great works of the second Five Year Plan.

G. Krzhizhanovsky.

SOVIET PUBLIC FINANCE

The Extension of Planning

THE inauguration of the Five Year Plan in 1928 involved much more than the laying down of an ambitious programme of economic construction. It marked the commencement of a new period in Soviet economic policy, during which one of the aims to be pursued was that of eliminating private enterprise in economic life and replacing it by State control in every sphere of activity. This involved a corresponding extension of the system of planning, which provided the machinery through which State control was exercised: and the constant endeavour of the planning system to strike ever deeper and deeper roots in the national economy is one of the outstanding features of development during the last few years. In industry the new policy has expressed itself in the increasing concentration and centralisation of production in the hands of the State; in agriculture it has been marked by the transfer from individual to collective farming. These changes in the sphere of production have necessitated equally fundamental changes in the sphere of finance, which has been subjected since 1928 to a process of radical reconstruction in all its important aspects.

The "Single Financial Plan"

During the period of the New Economic Policy, which preceded the Five Year Plan, private initiative remained active in economic life, direct State control being limited to the "commanding heights" of the national economy, namely, the large credit institutions, transport, the heavy industries. Under these conditions the Soviet Budget necessarily approximated to the form familiar under capitalist conditions, revenue consisting very largely of the yield from taxation, expenditure being listed under the non-productive heads of administration, defence, and various cultural services. But with the rapid extension of planning control over the processes of production and distribution, the Budget not only increased in amount—from a total of thirteen milliard roubles in 1928 to a total of thirty-two milliard roubles in 1931—but also reflected the assumption by the State of these wider functions, becoming finally, in 1931, the "Single Financial Plan," virtually a balance sheet for the whole of the economic life of the country. Of the total revenue, 42 per cent. is derived directly from State-controlled economic activities, 35 per cent. is obtained from taxation, the remaining resources being drawn from State loans, savings of the population and other miscellaneous sources. On the expenditure side, no less than 66 per cent. is devoted to financing economic needs, 18 per cent. to cultural requirements, the remainder to administration, defence, and other expenditure. Since by far the greater part of the yield from taxation comes from the tax on State-controlled industry, it is clear that approximately 70 per cent. of the total resources of the Financial Plan are drawn from, and devoted to, economic needs, and that Soviet Russia is rapidly becoming one vast business unit. Hence the whole centre of interest in public finance is tending to shift from the purely financial to the technical side, since it is technical questions which decide the level of internal efficiency, and this in turn sets the limits to the possible progress of the country, considered as a business concern.

Business Finance

As has been seen, industry plays an important part on both the revenue and expenditure sides of the Financial Plan, and attention has recently been focused on what must be a fundamental problem under any system of socialised control, that of combining centralised State control of industrial production with the continued exercise of individual responsibility and initiative in the separate producing units. The Russians have invented a name for the system under which it is hoped to effect this combination—*khozrazchet*, or economic accounting, by which is meant the establishment of such a system of financial control as will enlist the interest of producers in the financial results of their productive processes, and ensure the maximum production at the minimum cost.

In the early days of the Five Year Plan, industrial financing was conducted on the ordinary commercial basis characteristic of capitalist conditions, through the medium of bills of exchange. This was soon felt to be inconsistent with the extension of planning control, and the Decree on Credit Reform in January, 1930, abolished commercial credit, replacing it by direct bank credit at every step in the processes of production and distribution. Unfortunately, this system had disastrous reactions on *khozrazchet* by concentrating the attention of industrialists exclusively upon the production side of their enterprises, and relieving them from direct financial responsibility for the results of their productive processes. Subsequent Decrees, passed in January, March and July, 1931, endeavoured to meet this difficulty by various devices. Industrialists were required to work, not only on the basis of the Government plan drawn up for their particular enterprise, but also on the basis of definite contracts entered into between themselves and their customers; firms were confined strictly within the limits of the credit allowance established for them under the plan, and were not allowed to exceed it under any pretext. Finally, a determined attack was made upon "depersonalisation" (*obezlichka*) in financial matters by allowing business managers to have complete control of, and responsibility for, the circulating capital required for normal needs of production at the rate specified in the plan, while the Government, through the State Bank, retained control over all sums required for capital construction in industry and for the satisfaction of seasonal and other temporary requirements. It is to be expected that further experiment will be necessary before a complete solution is arrived at of this problem of preserving stimulus in a society which has replaced the profit-motive by the planning principle as the keystone of industrial life.

Taxation

Taxation occupies a position on the revenue side of the Soviet Budget second only in importance to the yield from State-controlled economic enterprise, the greater part of its proceeds (9.3 milliard roubles out of a total sum of 11 milliard roubles) being derived from the tax on industrial turnover. In general, the Soviet attitude towards taxation differs fundamentally from that of a capitalist Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose main preoccupations rest with the productivity of the taxes imposed, and the taxable capacity of the population. Under socialised conditions, on the other hand, it becomes possible to look forward to the gradual elimination of the system of taxation; when the process of socialisation is complete, and the State is the universal proprietor, it will be able to finance its needs simply by appropriations from the various branches of State ownership in the country. Meanwhile, taxation remains of importance not only from the point of view of revenue-raising, but as a weapon in the hands of the State for the enforcement of its social and industrial policy. As has been stated, the latter aims at present at eliminating private enterprise, both in industry and in agriculture, and the industrial tax, the income tax, the agricultural tax have all been manipulated with this end in view. By successive acts from 1928 onwards the industrial tax has been modified so as to increase the rates levied upon private enterprise. The Government's industrialisation policy has also been considered by varying the rates of the tax according to the nature of the goods produced, keeping these low on the products of heavy industry and on commodities of prime necessity, and raising them on luxury products. Income tax has been rearranged so as to fall more lightly upon manual workers and State employees, and with increasing severity upon private traders and industrialists, those with "non-labour" incomes, workers in religious cults, and so on. The agricultural tax has been drastically reorganised so as to penalise individual farming, encourage the formation of State-controlled collective farms, and stimulate production.

This manipulation of rates has been accompanied by sweeping measures of rationalisation in the machinery of tax assessment and collection. The extension of planning control renders possible a considerable simplification of economic relationships between socialised enterprises, and opens the way for a reduction in the number of taxes in force. This has been most striking in the case of the industrial tax, where fifty-three separate levies were merged, by the tax reform of September, 1930, in the single tax on turnover. Accuracy of assessment and speed of collection have been improved both in the industrial tax and in the income tax, by arranging for assessment on the basis of current turnover and income respectively instead of on the basis of figures for the previous year.

The Credit System

The planned mobilisation of funds on the revenue side of the Financial Plan finds its counterpart in their planned redistribution on the expenditure side, the credit system supplying the machinery through which this redistribution is effected. Here again a process of simplification and rationalisation has been found to be the necessary accompaniment of the extension of planning control.

The beginning of the Five Year Plan found Russia with quite a complex banking structure, short-term credit being dispensed by the State Bank, long-term credit by five large credit institutions with headquarters in Moscow and branches all over the Soviet Union; while the needs of private trade were supplied by a large number of individually small institutions known as mutual credit societies. By December, 1930, practically all the financial work of the country, both in the supplying of short-term and long-term credit had been concentrated in the hands of the State Bank, although for purposes of administrative convenience the Municipal

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Bank and the Long-Term Credit Bank for Industry still continue to finance their respective spheres of economic activity, and the numerous savings banks continue to mobilise the resources of the population. It is clear that the completion of the process of socialisation will see the State Bank, with its rapidly increasing network of branches, transformed into the Single Bank of the Soviet Union, the "counting-house of planned production and distribution on a social scale."

It is hardly possible as yet to discern the lineaments of the new science of finance which is being worked out to correspond with Russia's new structure of socialised control in economic life, since the entire process is being carried out in circumstances of intense haste and effort, of bewilderingly rapid change, and is inevitably being accomplished with a wide margin of waste and error. All that can be said with certainty so far is that the financial system is becoming more and more closely linked up with questions of technique, that the function of finance has definitely become that of acting as a Government-controlled centre for clearing and book-keeping operations, and of providing a channel through which the State may exercise regulation and control over economic processes.

Margaret S. Miller.

THE OLD MAN AND THE NEW

THE nineteenth century has been grandly described as "the age of progress," and the description is appropriate. In that century, reason, scientifically investigating the phenomena of nature and making elemental forces serve economic interests, had reached incredible heights and had created "the marvels of machinery." Studying organic life, reason discovered a world of invisible bacteria—a discovery not fully utilised, because of the disgraceful and cynical conservatism of a social system based on classes.

But, along with scientific thought, another line of thought was no less sedulously at work, creating among the bourgeoisie that mood known as "Weltschmerz"—the philosophy and poetry of pessimism. In 1812 Lord Byron published the first Cantos of *Childe Harold*, and soon after Giacomo Leopardi, Count Monaldo, philosopher and poet, began to preach the doctrine that knowledge only reveals the impotence of reason, that everything in the world is "vanity of vanities" and that only suffering and death are real. The doctrine is not a new one. It has been exquisitely propounded in Ecclesiastes; it was preached by Buddha; it oppressed the mind of Jean Jacques Rousseau, Chateaubriand, and many other men of intellect and genius. Its revival by Byron and Leopardi is difficult to explain merely on the ground of "the unhappiness" felt by the representatives of the feudal aristocracy at their defeat by the bourgeoisie, though, of course, when the triumphant bourgeoisie inherited the land of the aristocracy it also inherited certain ideas, and ideas have a pernicious habit of surviving the conditions which created them.

The survival of the idea of pessimism is due to the fact that in essence it is a deeply conservative philosophy; by declaring existence to be senseless it thereby satisfies the inquiries of not very inquisitive minds, and comforts the lovers of tranquillity. Moreover, the circle of consumers of ideas is neither big nor numerous, and there is no abundance of originality and courage in thought.

In the nineteenth century it was Germany which most sedulously supplied Europe with pessimistic thought. Without speaking of the pessimistic philosophy of Schopenhauer and Hartmann, Max Steirner the anarchist showed himself to be a great pessimist in his work *The One and His Property*. This also applied to Nietzsche, the propounder of the "superman" of bourgeois aspiration, an aspiration which, retrogressing from the illustrious Frederick the Great, came down to Bismarck, to the half-witted Wilhelm II, and, in our own day, to the manifestly abnormal Hitler.

In the first twelve years of the nineteenth century, the model of the "superman" for the bourgeoisie in Europe was *le petit caporal* Bonaparte. The influence of this half-fantastic biography on the thought and feeling of many generations of the bourgeoisie has not yet been sufficiently studied, though it was Bonaparte himself who demonstrated most convincingly the need for the bourgeoisie to back the "hero" and the inevitability of the "hero's" fall. We know how beautifully, if somewhat hysterically, the role of the "hero" as a maker of history was shown by Carlyle. He was believed, but this did not prevent the heroes from shrinking to the dimensions of Clemenceau, Churchill, Woodrow Wilson, Chamberlain and other "leaders of civilised mankind."

The "decline in Europe," that is, the spiritual impoverishment, the exhaustion of genius, the complete lack of organising ideas, is also common to the two Americas and to the whole world. The bright stars in the firmament of the bourgeoisie are extinguished. The "Forsytes" in England, the "Buddenbrooks" in Germany, "Mr. Babbitt" in the United States, are all incapable of producing heroes and are compelled to make them out of small adventurers. In a country where once the hazy placid optimism of Dickens eclipsed the healthy criticism of Thackeray, and where the solemn voice of Thomas Hardy was so recently stilled, such pernicious books, filled with pain and despair, as *Death of a Hero*, by Richard Aldington, are now possible. The literature of twentieth-century France has not even risen to the standard of artistic generalities achieved by Galsworthy, Thomas Mann and Sinclair Lewis. Romain Rolland, the author of that epic *Jean Cristophe*, a man of courage and honesty, is outside national limitations, having

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been driven out of his own country by the brutal stupidity of the bourgeoisie. This was France's loss, but the world's gain.

Rentier France is in the temper of a boa-constrictor which, having swallowed more food than it can digest, fears at the same time that what it has not managed to devour will be gobbled up by other animals of its type. But, of course, intellectual poverty does not prevent the customary senseless aspiration of the shopkeepers to seize new fertile lands for the enslavement of peoples in the colonies. But the accumulation of this golden fat is pressing more and more monstrously and heavily on the brain of the bourgeoisie. The spectacle of Europe's spiritual impoverishment is amazing, though men are more and more frequently to be met with who are ashamed to live in the cynical conditions created by the shopkeepers, and who realise that the shopkeepers' gamble on the "hero" individualism is lost.

To the question, "What did the social culture of Europe achieve in the nineteenth century?" only one answer is possible. It made Europe so monstrously rich that it is self-evident that her riches are the cause of the unprecedented impoverishment of the working class. It dug a pit between the working class and the bourgeoisie so deep that the fall of the bourgeoisie into it had become inevitable.

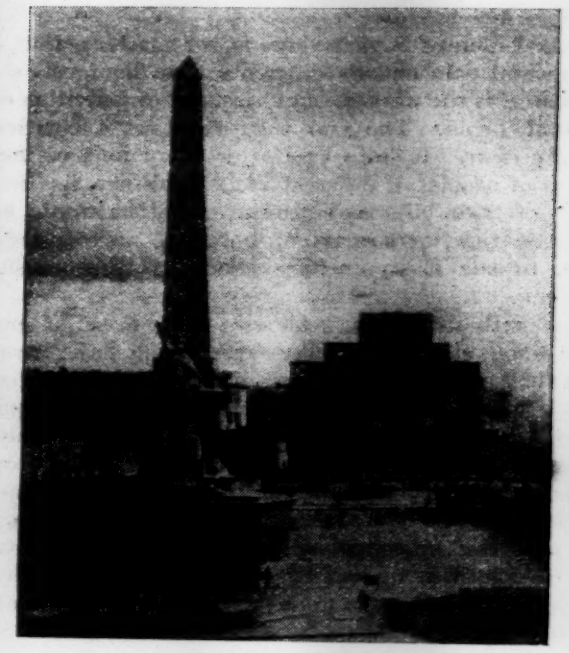
The process of a cultural revolution is rapidly developing in what was once the old Russia of the Romanov Tsars and half-literate tradesmen who sold the treasures of their land to capitalists of Europe by robbing the peasants and workers and abandoning them to the power of ignorant priests, extinguishers of reason. The pressure of State and Church on the freedom of human reason was heavier and more brutal in Russia than in Western Europe. Lack of opportunity, exile, persecution, even death, were the lot of men of genius in old Russia—and to a degree unheard of in other countries.

I am not one of those blind "lovers of my country," but I am sure that I know "the soul of the people." This big, capacious soul was permeated and poisoned by dark, monstrous superstitions and barbaric prejudices resulting from the primitive conditions of life. By the way, the knowledge of this soul must be got not through Turgenev, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky, but through its folk-lore and songs, its tales and proverbs and legends, its customs and church-rites, its sects, its trades, its work in the field of creative craftsmanship. Only this will give a complete idea, and a painful idea, of the deep ignorance of the people, side by side with their wonderful variety of gifts.

In the twentieth century the Russian bourgeoisie had no very attractive picture of a peasant in literature. The moujik in the years 1905–07, having decided to free the land for himself, took to burning and wrecking the estates of the landowners, and, at the same time, treated the workers "on strike" with hostility and distrust. In the year 1917 he felt the simple right of the working class, and, as we know, stuck his bayonet into the ground and refused to kill the workers and peasants of Germany.

Since then fifteen years have gone by. What has been achieved in the Union of Soviets during those years? I shall not speak of the great work of industrialising a technically backward country, a country with a primitive economy, which has been finally destroyed by the Imperialist war of capitalists, followed by the war of the working class against the barbarians of their own country and those of Europe—a war in which the working class fought for the right to culture and the intelligentsia for the right of the bourgeoisie to rob.

I shall not refer to the growth of universities and scientific research institutes, the wealth of mineral resources discovered in those years, sufficient to ensure economic and cultural development of the country for centuries to come. All this is known. Only those who are blinded by animal interests and inhuman class prejudices can fail to see these



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TRAVEL IN
SOVIET RUSSIA

conquests of reason and will. Only those who are too lazy, or those journalists whose masters have forbidden it, can fail to see the truth.

In the Union of Soviets there is one master; that is its fundamental gain and its difference from bourgeois states. This master is the workers' and peasants' organisation of the pupils of Lenin. The aim they have set themselves is perfectly clear. It is to create for every unit of the 160 millions of peoples of different races conditions for the free growth of their gifts and genius. In other words, to set in motion this inert mass of potential nerve and brain power, to stir it to creative effort. Is this possible of achievement?

It is actually being achieved. The mass of people, before whom all roads of culture are opening, have, springing up in their midst, tens of thousands of gifted youths who go into every sphere in which energy can be applied—science, engineering, art, administration. Inevitably, so far, we live and work not without mistakes. The property instinct, stupidity, laziness, and vices inherited from the centuries cannot be eradicated in a decade and a half. Only a lunatic, or one whose spite amounts to lunacy, will dare to deny this undisputed fact—the distance dividing the young generation of workers in Europe from the manifest achievements of universal human culture is, in the Soviet Union, decreasing at an amazing rate.

Leaning on what is of stable value in the old culture, the people of the Soviet Union are courageously developing their national yet universal human values. Anybody who wants to can see it for himself in the young literature and music of the national minorities in the Union. We must mention the emancipated woman of the Turkish and Turco-Finnish races, and her aspirations and efforts for a new mode of life.

Legislation in the Soviet Union springs from the working masses of the people, from the soil of their practical experience and the changing conditions of their work. The Soviet of Peoples Commissaries merely translates experience into law. They can make no laws that are not in the interests of the working class, because there is no other master in the country.

No one could point to a single decree passed by the Soviet of Peoples Commissaries which had not as its aim the satisfaction of the cultural needs and demands of the working people. Leningrad is to be reconstructed, and participating in the conferences relating to this reconstruction are architects, sanitary specialists, physicians, writers, artists, and, of course, workers representing the factories. As far as I know this is not a practice followed in Europe.

The Soviet press, with a quarrelsomeness which, to my mind, is excessive and even harmful, because it arouses impossible hopes in the brain of the bourgeoisie, criticises any mistakes made in the work of construction and shows up the pernicious stupidity of the old life, a thing not permitted to the bourgeois press, which corrupts the uncultured reader with sadistic details of murders and sensational stories of clever rogues.

For fifteen years the masses of workers and peasants have been sending forth from their midst thousands of inventors, and are still doing so—inventors who save the Union hundreds of millions of roubles and are gradually doing away with needless imports. A worker who feels himself to be master of production naturally develops a sense of responsibility towards the country, and this impels him to greater efforts to improve the quality of his work and to lower the cost of production.

Before the revolution the peasant worked in conditions of the seventeenth century; he was entirely dependent on the caprices of the elements, on his exhausted soil, split up into tiny plots. Now he is rapidly being supplied with tractors, sowers, combines; he makes extensive use of fertilisers, and at his service are twenty-six agrarian research institutes. He had no idea of science, yet experience makes him see the force of it and the power of human thought.

The young fellow from the country who enters the factory, run on the most modern and perfect inventions of technical science, enters a world of phenomena which strikes his imagination and sets him free from the old barbaric superstitions and prejudices. He sees the work of the mind embodied in complex machinery and machine tools, and though he may spoil something or other, the growth of his intelligence compensates for any material loss sustained. He sees that the masters of the factories are workers like himself, that the young engineer is the son of a worker or peasant. He soon comes to regard the factory as a school, opening up opportunities for an unrestricted development of his abilities. If he shows promise he is sent to one of the higher educational institutions, though there are works now which have their own higher technical schools. His nerve and brain power, in which the gift of investigation and perception of world phenomena is latent, is vigorously stirred by the many amenities his father had never known. He frequents theatres acknowledged to be the best in Europe, he goes to concerts, he reads the classic literatures of Europe and old Russia, he visits museums, he studies his country, as no one before him had studied it.

The capitalists, in their cynical game, are gambling on the stupidity of the masses, while in the Soviet Union an order is in process of development based on the conscious right of the working class to power. A new man is growing up in the Soviet Union and already one can form an accurate estimate of his quality.

He has faith in the organising force of reason, a faith lost and spent by the intelligentsia of Europe in sterile endeavours to reconcile the anomalies of class. The new man feels himself to be the creator and master of the new world, and though he still lives under hard conditions he knows that it is his function to establish better; that is his purpose, the business of his rational will. That is why he

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has no ground to be a pessimist. He is not young biologically only, but historically as well. He is a force which has only just realised its direction and significance in history, and he is going on with his work of cultural construction with all the daring of a young, still unused force, guided by a clear and simple teaching. The groanings and the lamentations of a Spengler, frightened by machinery, amuse him, because he well knows that machinery has never been utilised in the cultural interests of the hundreds of millions of men slavishly employed in manual work. He sees that the bourgeoisie has ignominiously lost in its gamble on individualism; that, on the whole, the bourgeoisie has not helped the development of individuality; that, in self-interest, the bourgeoisie has limited that development by overtly and covertly proclaiming as an "eternal truth" the right to power over the majority of men. Repudiating bourgeois animal individualism, the new man realises only too well the high integrity of individuality closely bound up with the collective. He himself is that individuality, freely pouring his energy and inspiration into the whole, into the process of the labour of the whole. Capitalism has brought men to anarchy, with the menace of a great catastrophe hanging over them. Any honest man can see it.

The aim of the old world is to restore, by process of physical and moral violence in the shape of wars in the field and bloodshed in the streets of cities, the old, rotten, inhuman "order" outside of which Capitalism cannot exist. The aim of the new man is to free the working masses from old superstitions and prejudices of race, nation, class and religion, to create a universal brotherhood, each member of which will work according to his capacity and receive according to his need.

MAXIM GORKY.

THE SOVIET STAGE

THE curtain rose on a brothel in Geneva out of which several European statesmen marched in top-hats to take their place at a table marked Disarmament Conference. Mr. Hoover for some reason sat at the top of the table, and the Pope, for another reason, at the bottom. Mr. Baldwin and General Pilsudski were curiously present, M. Briand (a month before his death) and Signor Grandi. Russia and Germany were not visibly represented.

A bright young man with a little parcel rushed in, laid the parcel on the table and said that it contained the latest lethal discovery, guaranteed to exterminate a whole people in the twinkling of an eye. The delegates were shocked, profoundly shocked. But, when the sitting was over they all, with one accord, made a dash for the young man who had retired into a corner. A desperate fight ensued in which everyone's clothes were torn to pieces. Finally, "Comrade Stanley" secured the parcel and was walking off with it when someone cried, "Open it! Let's see." He agreed. It contained a map of the Soviet Union. Once again the dishevelled statesmen fought for it. This time they each got a piece of the map and walked away with it.

The curtain fell and Moscow's Music Hall had scored another success. The audience were delighted: why, of course, the whole object of European, American and Asiatic armaments was the dismemberment of the Soviet Union! Thus, all over Russia, theatre, opera and cinema have their political message. "Down with hypocrisy" seems to be the *leitmotiv*. Nothing is safe on the Russian stage except the Bolshevik "Party Line." "Right" and "Left" deviations from it are made the subject of a whole play as in *Chleb* (Bread) or *Strach* (Fear), and those two plays were the daily food of the theatre-going public in the dozen Soviet towns I have been wandering through these last five months. Clubs and theatres and amateur companies advertised the same two plays everywhere. You could see

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them translated into Georgian in the Caucasus, or into Uzbek in Samarkand, and you could discuss them in every train or café, for they were problem plays.

Chleb shows you how to go the right and the wrong way about gathering peasants into a Collective Farm. The hero, a purist in his Stalinism, succeeds, while the villain, a sympathetic but misguided Communist, gets wounded in a shooting affray that nearly deafens the audience in the last act. But *Strach* probes farther into Russia's daily problems. It is the struggle of youth and age, of enthusiasm and experience, of the People's ignorance and the Bourgeois' culture, with an interlude in which an old professor makes a long speech stating that 90 per cent. of the population in the Soviet Union live by fear, 5 per cent. by hunger and 5 per cent. by love. Not until the last motive becomes the first will the new life begin to flourish. As head of a laboratory he proposes to bring about the change scientifically. He has already experimented on rabbits (O brave new world !). Bolsheviks, fierce and undaunted, young and old, are not lacking to fight his theory and his remedy. Rather unfairly, a political plot comes to their aid, and the old professor is implicated in planning a Georgian revolt with help and money from Russian exiles in Paris. He weathers the storm and the G.P.U., being at heart genuinely interested in the Five Year Plan, and incidentally innocent. So he devotes the rest of his life and labours to the welfare (on Party lines) of the proletariat.

Can politics ever be the subject of art ? A Daumier or a Raemaker have made it so, and that witty political stage in Berlin, the Kabaret der Komiker, occasionally carries it off. The alternative, for countries that are still aglow with their revolutions, is to ban the game entirely (as in Italy) and risk the suppression of a whole people's gifts in painting, literature, acting and music.

Moreover, the Bolshevik policy pays, because the political *raconteur* who appears in every Soviet circus between the bicycling bears and the acrobats, or the blonde singer in every music-hall singing " Rot Front " (in full evening dress, as though she never intended to rouse Neukölln, Wedding and other suburbs of Berlin to bloody revolution), or the propaganda films, are but agents of a central Government, more powerful than the press and more convincing. But in this deluge of political manna that rains on to the Russian stage, screen and circus to-day, you may find some native wit, no lack of imagination and rarely any vulgarity.

Such is the acting in Turkestan, where the Uzbeks were performing a political pantomime last month about the romantic conversion of an Uzbek girl to the Young Communists' Movement. They gave it only on the native nights in the theatre in Tashkent, and it was danced and sung with great skill. Such, too, was the staging of *Chleb* at the Red Army House in Tiflis, where the soldiers used the tiny stage in three tiers, in the best Piscator tradition. That famous German producer is just now devoting himself to films in Moscow, so that some worthy successors to *Storm Over Asia* and *The Way to Life* may shortly be expected.

When Mr. H. G. Wells visited Moscow and Leningrad so long ago as 1920, and so soon after the revolution that he had visions of a dying Russia, he wrote : " Art, literature, science . . . all that we mean by civilisation were involved in this tremendous catastrophe. For a time the stablest thing in Russian culture was the theatre. There stood the theatres, and nobody wanted to loot them or destroy them : the artists went on meeting and working, and the tradition of official subsidies held good. So quite amazingly the Russian dramatic and operatic life kept on through the extremest storms of violence, and keeps on to this day." (*Russia in the Shadows*, by H. G. Wells, Hodder and Stoughton.) Such is still the case in the capital and in Leningrad. Their opera and art theatres gather the best that Russia produces in singing, dancing and acting, and the best that Russia, Europe and the United States have written, in music and drama, as long as it does not corrupt Marxist morals. They, too, have their political nights, the Opera with *The Red Poppy* and the First Art Theatre with *Strach* and *Chleb*, these two both faultlessly produced, which only serves to reveal the faults in the plays themselves.

The manager of the First Art Theatre, Bulgakoff, is the moving spirit of that magnificent organisation. It is a pity that his genius as a playwright is cramped by the exigencies of the censor, for his *Days of the Turbin Family* is surely a great tragedy. It was prohibited for three years and put on again this spring for a few nights. The vicissitudes of the Turbin family before, during and after the reign of Petlura ; how the family is broken up between White, Petluran and Red armies, torn by doubts and fears in every succeeding struggle until only a widow and a crippled youth are left alive to face the future—it is all a masterly presentation of the problems that had to be faced by those who had the means to fly, but chose to stay on after the Revolution.

While the rest of Russia is being fed on political ballets, films, satires, comedies and melodramas, the Turkish theatre in Baku decided this winter to give some performances of *Hamlet*. The theatre was crowded with the young men of the new autonomous republic of Azerbaijan, and a score of young unveiled women. On the stage, the language of Shakespeare seemed to go with a guttural swing in Turkish, but the costumes were a delight. Polonius had become a Grand Vizier, resplendent in a headdress studded with precious stones, Ophelia an unhappy Turkish maid, in loose white silk trousers and golden tunic. Hamlet's parents as gorgeous eastern potentates, and his players with their reed pipes and two-stringed guitars, were a revel of colour. Across that rich and crowded scene, Hamlet, looking unexpectedly Elizabethan with a feather in his black velvet cap, asked his great question. And the audience waited breathlessly for the answer. You could have heard a pin drop in that theatre, until people began to die on the stage. Then someone laughed and the laugh spread. There were few people in the audience over thirty, in fact they barely belonged to the first generation of Marxist pioneers, and I believe they really thought it funny for a man to die, merely because he was unable to settle the question of how to live.

Long after I have crossed the Russian frontier, I can still hear a chorus of Soviet censors shouting : " No romance ; everything else, but not that ! " Romance, in the narrow sense in which the Western European often uses the word, is uncongenial to the atmosphere of a Five Year Plan ; moreover, it is retrospective and dangerous, they say. And, for the present, from Turkestan to Siberia, and from the Baltic to the Black Sea, the censors have won.

Sylvia Saunders.

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

POSTPONEMENT OF LECTURES. Owing to the illness of Professor M. Schlick, the Course of three lectures on "FORM AND CONTENT" arranged to be given at King's College on May 17, 18, and 20 has been postponed.

A Lecture on "THE PENAL LAWS OF ASSYRIA CIRCA 1200 B.C.," will be given by Sir JOHN MILES, M.A., B.C.L. (Fellow of Merton College, Oxford) at KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON (Strand, W.C.2), on WEDNESDAY, MAY 18th, at 5.30 p.m. The Chair will be taken by Professor Sir Denison Ross, C.I.E., Ph.D., Director of the School of Oriental Studies and Professor of Persian in the University.

A Course of three Lectures on "THE BIOLOGICAL CONTROL OF INSECTS AND WEED PESTS" will be given by Dr. F. SILVESTRI (Professor of General and Agricultural Zoology in the R. Istituto superiore agrario, Portici) in the Mathematics Lecture Theatre, IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (Exhibition Road, South Kensington, S.W.7) on MAY 23rd, 25th and 27th, at 5.30 p.m. At the first Lecture the Chair will be taken by Professor E. W. MacBride, D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.S., Professor of Zoology in the University. Lantern illustrations.

A Course of two Lectures on "CENTRAL ASIATIC AND SIBERIAN ROCK-PICTURES" will be given by Professor A. M. TALLGREN (Professor of Archæology of Finland and the Northern Countries in the University of Helsingfors) at UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON (Gower Street, W.C.1), on MAY 23rd and 25th, at 5.30 p.m. At the first Lecture the Chair will be taken by Sir Charles Peers, C.B.E., F.B.A., F.R.I.B.A., Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings, Lantern illustrations.

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S. J. WORSLEY,
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Major T. J. FAITHFULL
will deliver a lecture on
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All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 Great Queen Street, Kingsway, London, W.C.2. The Postage on this issue is: Inland, 1d.; Foreign, 1½d.; Canada, 1d.

THE murder of Mr. Inukai last Saturday, following on the recent outrages, is a symptom of the profound unrest in Japan. There is no evidence, it is true, of any widespread revolutionary conspiracy; the assassins were a handful of young naval officers and military cadets, influenced apparently by some fanatical organisation or individuals, and acting from patriotic motives. But while the deed is universally condemned, it evokes no sympathy with the "politicians" as a class, and it seems pretty certain that it will strengthen the Army in its tussle with them. The "politicians," whether Liberals like two of the previous victims, or Conservatives like Mr. Inukai, have become a rank offence to the Chauvinists of Japan; their conduct of affairs at home has given little satisfaction to the more peaceable elements in the country. Party government is in disrepute, and the omens point to a "National" Ministry. This is not likely to make a solution of the Manchurian problem any simpler. It may also, in so far as the influence of the Army is predominant, complicate domestic affairs. Quite apart from the Socialist and Communist movements (which are weak), there is an anti-capitalist tendency in the Army that might develop a policy of social reform on Fascist lines.

The delay in the formation of a new Government in France is both unprecedented and unfortunate. M. Tardieu, who tendered his resignation immediately after the elections last week, has agreed to carry on for the time being, but only as a matter of pure routine, and without taking any responsibility for policy. What the new Government will be must remain uncertain till near the end of the month, when the Socialist and the Radical Parties have made up their minds. The Socialists are divided on the question of collaboration with M. Herriot, but will probably agree to it on M. Blum's terms. M. Blum's terms, however, which include drastic retrenchment on armaments, as well as the nationalisation of banking and of insurance, will be a stiff dose for the Radicals to swallow. M. Herriot himself lies low and says nuffin—except to drop hints at policies of moderation, which are discouraging to those who had hoped to see him come out as a man of vision and courage. If he finally turns to his right for support, we shall have to be prepared for the same old France at the international council board. A great part of the French electorate will be indignant at having been "sold a pup," for those who voted for Radical candidates at the second ballot voted against, and not for, the Centre.

* * *

The Liberian representative at Geneva has admitted that the atrocities which the Christie Commissioners